WHAT IS SHAKESPEARE?

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# WHAT IS SHAKESPEARE?

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# WHAT IS SHAKESPEARE?

## AN INTRODUCTION TO THE GREAT PLAYS

BY

L. A. SHERMAN

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

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To

GEORGE EDWIN MacLEAN

# CONTENTS

## I

### WHAT IS SHAKESPEARE?


| | PAGE | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|---|
| A Shakespeare paradox | 1 | What it is to be educated | 7 |
| Shakespeare's public | 2 | What Shakespeare can supply to men | 7 |
| Shakespeare as a novelist | 3 | This author cannot be imparted by abstractions | 7 |
| Difficulties of reading this author | 4 | Plan of the work | 8 |
| Proper materials for literary treatment | 5 | | |
| What all men seek | 6 | | |


## II

### CYMBELINE


| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Use of the two Gentlemen | 9 | Iachimo's first impressions of Imogen | 32 |
| Imogen released from prison | 10 | Her influence upon his language | 34 |
| Imogen's repose and fortitude | 11 | His innuendos | 35 |
| Her keepsake gift | 12 | Imogen not jealous | 37 |
| Her matter-of-fact quality of mind | 13 | Iachimo's humiliation | 39 |
| Why the first scene laid in a garden | 14 | He unsays his slander | 40 |
| Cymbeline's fatuous rage | 15 | His strategy of the trunk | 41 |
| Imogen's tastes | 16 | Imogen's power | 42 |
| Cloten's assault upon Posthumus | 17 | Cloten belated in dissipation | 43 |
| Cloten's imbecility | 18 | Imogen a reader | 43 |
| Imogen's devotion | 19 | Her lack of curiosity | 44 |
| Posthumus as Philario's guest | 22 | Iachimo's fear | 46 |
| Iachimo's craft | 23 | Cloten's serenade | 47 |
| His motive | 24 | He calls Imogen sister | 49 |
| Posthumus overmatched | 26 | Cloten's grievance | 52 |
| The Queen's request for poisons | 29 | Posthumus unadvised of Imogen's troubles by her | 54 |
| Pisanio provided with the drugs | 30 | Iachimo infuriates Posthumus | 55 |

| | PAGE |
|---|---|
| Posthumus's resolve to punish Imogen | 57 |
| The Queen's policy in Roman matters | 58 |
| The need, for plot purposes, of a war | 60 |
| Posthumus's demands upon Pisanio | 60 |
| Imogen's response to her husband's summons | 61 |
| Posthumus's letter to Imogen | 62 |
| Belarius and the Princes | 64 |
| Cymbeline's Latin tastes | 65 |
| Posthumus's second letter to Pisanio | 66 |
| Effect of her husband's order upon Imogen | 67 |
| Imogen willing to go to Italy | 68 |
| Cloten inveigled to Milford | 70 |
| Cloten made to wear Posthumus's garments | 71 |
| Imogen bewildered and exhausted | 72 |
| Imogen found in the cave of the mountaineers | 74 |
| Imogen fascinates her brothers | 75 |
| Iachimo drawn into the British war | 77 |
| Imogen left in the cave by the hunters | 78 |
| Cloten arrived in Wales | 80 |
| Cloten's death | 80 |
| Imogen brought out as dead by Arviragus | 82 |
| Arviragus and Guiderius in contrast | 83 |
| Belarius kept from the burial situation | 84 |
| The burial song recited by the brothers | 85 |
| Cloten's body laid by Imogen | 86 |
| Imogen recovered from the effects of the drug | 86 |
| Imogen swoons on Cloten's body | 87 |
| Imogen found by Lucius | 87 |
| Imogen made willing by the supposed mutilation of her husband's body to leave Britain | 89 |
| The use of her insult to Cloten | 90 |
| Cymbeline's lethargy lifted | 90 |
| The forces of Cymbeline in Wales | 92 |
| Posthumus keeps the bloody handkerchief | 92 |
| Iachimo's conscience aroused | 93 |
| Cymbeline rescued by Posthumus's aid | 94 |
| Posthumus seeks death | 95 |
| Cornelius and court ladies in Wales | 96 |
| Lucius bespeaks his life from Imogen | 98 |
| Imogen recognises her mother's ring | 98 |
| Iachimo's confession | 99 |
| The agony of Posthumus | 100 |
| Imogen's sorrow for the Queen's death | 102 |
| Guiderius proved Imogen's brother | 102 |
| Iachimo pardoned by Posthumus | 103 |
| The character of Imogen | 105 |
| Shakespeare a revealer and interpreter of life | 109 |


## III

### THE WINTER'S TALE


| | |
|---|---|
| The *Winter's Tale* opened like *Cymbeline* | 111 |
| Leontes and Polyxenes at odds | 112 |
| Hermione humours her husband | 113 |
| Mamillius used against his mother | 115 |
| Camillo forced into a plot against Polyxenes | 117 |
| Polyxenes apprised of the plot | 118 |
| Mamillius used in his mother's behalf | 118 |
| Hermione requests from her son a story | 119 |
| Leontes and his lords enter the Queen's apartments | 120 |
| Hermione's repose | 122 |

PAGE

Hermione ordered to prison . 122
The appeal to the oracle at Delphi . . . . . 123
Greene's novel of *Dorastus and Fawnia* . . . . . 124
Paulina as Hermione's foil . 124
Paulina brings the babe to the King . . . . . 126
Paulina defies the guard . . 127
The need of an Antigonus . 128
Cleomenes and Dion hastening for the Queen's sake . . 129
Hermione brought to the sessions 129
Her absolute, unshrinking faith 130
The King put to confusion . 131
The response of the oracle . 132
Leontes impugns the decision . 132
Report of Mamillius's death . 132

PAGE

Hermione's swoon . . . . 133
Paulina's invective against the King . . . . . 133
Hermione and Imogen contrasted . . . . . 135
The Globe and Blackfriars as centres of influence . . 136
The limitations of the plot in *The Winter's Tale* . . . . 139
*The Winter's Tale* a comedy . 141
Perdita shown in false positions 142
Florizel characterised . . 143
Polyxenes and Camillo try Perdita . . . . . 144
Perdita's welcome to her friends 145
The use of Polyxenes's anger . 146
Perdita's self-possession . . 147
Perdita in Paulina's chapel . 148

## IV

### ROMEO AND JULIET

The plot borrowed from Brooke 149
Purpose of the street fray . . 150
Romeo in love with his ideals . 151
Juliet's mother . . . . . 152
The art of portraying character 153
Juliet's nurse . . . . . 153
Paris recommended to Juliet . 155
Mercutio a nearer friend to Romeo than Benvolio . . 156
The meeting of Romeo and Juliet . . . . . 156
Tybalt's interference . . . 157
Juliet of Gothic temperament . 160
Use of the chorus . . . . 160
Rosaline a symbol of his ideal to Romeo . . . . . 162
The change in Romeo after the sight of Juliet . . . . 162
Mercutio not lofty minded . 164
Juliet gives up her hate of the Montagues . . . . . 165
Romeo's mind and Juliet's in contrast . . . . . 167
Juliet plans for both . . . 168
Shakespeare's alleviation of the haste . . . . . 170
The climax of the balcony scene 173
The intuition of Shakespeare's women . . . . . 174
The *Romeo and Juliet* only another *Cymbeline* . . . 175
The basis of this play . . . 176
Mercutio's gifts made over to Romeo . . . . . 177
The deeper meaning of the play 178
The art of the play not inferior to the art of *Cymbeline* and *The Winter's Tale* . . . . 181

## V

### THE DRAMATIC ART OF MACBETH

The "maximum consummation" in Shakespeare's dramas . 184
The first condition of tragedy . 184
Duncan an unkingly figure . 185

| | PAGE |
|---|---|
| Use of the battle in Lochaber | 186 |
| The Witches' Masters | 187 |
| The opening scene | 187 |
| The Witches differentiated | 188 |
| Use of the Sergeant | 189 |
| Malcolm, like the King, unmartial | 190 |
| The composite battle | 191 |
| Macdonwald bewitched | 191 |
| Sweno also handicapped by the demons | 193 |
| Macbeth as the saviour of Scotland | 193 |
| The new mischief of the Witches | 195 |
| Macbeth's satisfaction over the battle | 196 |
| The prophecy touching his future | 197 |
| The Minor Obstacle | 197 |
| The Major Obstacle | 198 |
| Resolution of the Minor | 199 |
| Lady Macbeth as the new factor in the plan | 200 |
| Her worship of her husband | 202 |
| Banquo as Duncan's chamberlain | 203 |
| The first crisis of the play | 204 |
| The close of the First Act in Shakespeare | 205 |
| Banquo's defection from the King | 206 |
| The effect of his resolve upon Macbeth | 206 |
| The Major Obstacle removed | 208 |
| Macbeth and Lady Macbeth's first blunders | 209 |
| Macbeth's fatal error | 210 |
| Lady Macbeth's swoon | 211 |
| Macbeth and Lady Macbeth appear crowned but once | 211 |
| Macbeth's hate of Banquo | 213 |
| The Third Murderer | 214 |
| Banquo's ghost an apparition raised by the Witches | 215 |
| The climax of the banquet scene | 216 |
| The subjective climax of the play | 217 |
| Macbeth degraded by applying to the Witches | 218 |
| The pretended ghost of Banquo again shown | 219 |
| The butchery of Lady Macduff and her children | 219 |
| Malcolm subordinates Macduff | 221 |
| Duncan of the Edward Confessor type of king | 222 |
| Malcolm amended martially | 222 |
| The Fourth Act in Shakespeare a preparing time | 223 |
| The climax in the sleep-walking scene | 224 |
| *Macbeth* and *Cymbeline* compared | 225 |
| *Cymbeline*, a tragedy | 227 |
| The obstacles in *Romeo and Juliet* | 229 |
| The subjective climax in these plays | 230 |
| Novels constructed on Shakespeare's plan | 230 |
| *Richard Carvel* | 231 |
| *Quentin Durward* | 231 |
| *Evan Harrington* | 232 |
| Ultimate meaning of the novels | 233 |
| Tennyson's *The Princess* | 234 |
| The Short Story | 235 |
| *Quo Vadis* | 235 |
| *Cyrano de Bergerac* | 235 |


## VI

### SHAKESPEARE THE MAN


| | |
|---|---|
| The birth of Shakespeare | 236 |
| First mention of the poet in formal Latin | 236 |
| Shakespeare's mother | 237 |
| Thomas Cromwell's injunction to the clergy | 237 |
| Shakespeare's father | 238 |
| The poet's birthplace | 239 |
| Shakespeare's country | 240 |
| The Free Grammar School of Stratford | 242 |
| Shakespeare's teachers | 243 |

| | PAGE |
|---|---|
| Shakespeare's diction | 243 |
| John Shakespeare's waning fortunes | 244 |
| Shakespeare's marriage | 245 |
| A possible precontract of marriage | 247 |
| The deer-stealing episode | 249 |
| Shakespeare in London | 250 |
| The attack of Greene | 251 |
| Chettle's apology | 253 |
| Shakespeare as an actor | 255 |
| *Venus and Adonis* | 257 |
| *Lucrece* | 258 |
| *Titus Andronicus* | 259 |
| *The Comedy of Errors* | 260 |
| *Romeo and Juliet* | 260 |
| Grant of coat armour | 261 |
| Purchase of New Place | 261 |
| Shakespeare's income | 263 |
| Friendship of the poet with Ben Jonson | 263 |
| The *Palladis Tamia* | 265 |
| The Globe Theatre | 267 |
| *The Merry Wives* | 268 |
| *Twelfth Night* | 268 |
| *The Returne from Pernassus* | 269 |
| *Hamlet* | 269 |
| The period of Shakespeare's maturity | 269 |
| The Stratford tithes | 270 |
| Marriage of Susanna Shakespeare | 270 |
| The *Sonnets* | 270 |
| The dark lady | 272 |
| Shakespeare's optimism | 273 |
| The Blackfriars Theatre | 274 |
| *Cymbeline* | 274 |
| *The Winter's Tale* | 274 |
| Shakespeare's London house | 274 |
| The Globe Theatre burned | 275 |
| Shakespeare's will | 275 |
| Death of the poet | 275 |
| Inscription on his tomb | 277 |
| The Stratford bust | 277 |
| The Droeshout portrait | 279 |
| The saneness of Shakespeare's mind | 280 |
| The Bacon question | 282 |
| Shakespeare's learning | 283 |
| The burden of proof in the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy | 284 |


## VII

### THE GROUPINGS OF THE PLAYS


| | |
|---|---|
| Strictures of Ben Jonson | 285 |
| Shakespeare and the classicists | 286 |
| Shakespeare's borrowed plots | 286 |
| Divisions of the plays | 287 |
| Two principal periods of production | 288 |
| The pessimistic plays | 289 |
| *Hamlet* | 290 |
| *King Lear* | 303 |
| *Julius Cæsar* | 312 |
| *Othello* | 313 |
| *Antony and Cleopatra* | 315 |
| *Coriolanus* | 318 |
| *Much Ado* | 320 |
| *Midsummer Night's Dream* | 321 |
| *Taming of the Shrew* | 322 |
| *Twelfth Night* | 323 |
| *As You Like It* | 325 |
| *The Merchant of Venice* | 326 |


## VIII

### PERSONAL STUDY OF THE PLAYS


| | |
|---|---|
| Knowing one play is knowing Shakespeare | 329 |
| Use of the outlines | 330 |
| The end of Shakespeare study | 330 |
| The literature of Shakespeare | 331 |

## APPENDIX

### OUTLINE QUESTIONS

I

PAGE

*The Winter's Tale* . . . . . 335

II

*Romeo and Juliet* . . . . . 360

III

*Twelfth Night* . . . . . 388

INDEX . . . . . 409

# WHAT IS SHAKESPEARE?

# WHAT IS SHAKESPEARE?

## I

WHAT is Shakespeare? Why does the world account him great, and put him so generally at the head of all literary masters? Most people, at least such as have to do with books, at some time or other ask themselves these questions, and often fail of personal, satisfying conclusions. Men and women of liberal education for the most part understand Shakespeare's secret, having divined it in consequence of many years of training. Some common folk become his confident disciples without such aid. But the great majority of readers seem not to know what Shakespeare is like, or how a maker of plays should be held superior to authors who produce literature in a more popular and available form.

A Shakespeare paradox.

It has been noted that men will singly and severally doubt upon occasion what they collectively allow. The supporters of a party sometimes vote for candidates that they do not individually approve. That people should believe in Shakespeare who are without knowledge of his quality is only in seeming paradoxical, and is a thing incident to growing culture. We of the English-speaking populations, who

The public not educated to Shakespeare's level.

claim Shakespeare ours, have become the largest of literary publics. We are reading in the main good books, but have not yet come into companionship with the best. While we are trying to live up to our truest intellectual light, we are partly conscious of standards toward which we are but slowly rising. Hence is it that our personal appreciation of Shakespeare falls much below our prescriptive judgments concerning his place and worth. His works stand conspicuously on our library shelves, yet of all books are approached perhaps least often. He is praised loudly by many of us who have never studied so much as a single play, or reached in any manner the least experience of his inspiration. We are sure that Shakespeare is wonderful, yet we would rather perhaps avoid than suffer an actual acquaintance with the proofs. This does not mean that we are really disingenuous, or dissemblers, but that we have come to take Shakespeare for granted, like many other things, on the testimony of those whose knowledge is expert.

Reading Shakespeare does not call for new processes or gifts.

What we may call Shakespeare's public is not made up of those who read him discerningly, and prize him, and such others as do not read, yet praise; there are other groups and sections of not less interest and worth to culture. Many people are vaguely conscious of great truths in Shakespeare, and are almost in sight of what they mean; they feel the influence of a great presence that they cannot find. Then there is a large and constantly increasing class of readers who have right notions touching fellow-

ship with Shakespeare, and are abundantly fitted to compass it, yet believe that they could never, even with persistent effort, rise to his thought. They assume, of course mistakenly, that they would need to learn new processes, or be mentally reënforced in some mysterious way, to understand him. On the other hand, there are not a few instructed people, some of them professors even in our colleges, who affirm that there are no marvels in Shakespeare save what his admirers read into him, and that his literary art is but a myth. What is worse, many of those who have been schooled concerning Shakespeare's quality declare that they have received no insight, and do not believe what they have been taught. That the last-named group should be largely recruited year by year from the graduates of our colleges and schools is not reassuring, and must be due to faults of pedagogy. There is not the slightest question that Shakespeare's following increases year by year; the phenomenal sale of his editions, and particularly of some recent ones, proves that. There is small doubt that all intelligent and educated readers will one day know what Shakespeare is, and appreciate him fully. But we have clearly reached a stage where the growth of literary taste and wisdom might well advance with considerably accelerated speed.

Undoubtedly Shakespeare would have much greater currency to-day, had his works been novels; and this author, were he living now, would pretty surely write stories instead of plays. But we should not expect Shakespeare to produce fiction of mere incident or

adventure. He would certainly make novels more nearly like *The Mill on the Floss*, or *Evan Harrington*, or *The Cossacks*, or *Fathers and Children*, than any others that we have; only they would be more profound and powerful. It would not be possible to appreciate such books as he would write without some seriousness of purpose and considerable power of literary appreciation. There would thus remain the same difficulty that we meet to-day in trying to read Shakespeare as he is.

Shakespeare would to-day write novels.

Those who have the power of literary appreciation, which is an accomplishment that can be imparted as well as learned, should be able to read plays and poetry and fiction with equal facility and success. Many readers who have this power with novels find themselves reading Shakespeare merely for the story. They do not know how to approach a play, and are hindered from the vital meanings by the form. In order to aid those who would be glad to read Shakespeare and like authors more confidently and completely, the publishers have asked me to make this little book. I have assumed the task reluctantly, partly because the attempt is no easy one, and in part from fear lest the whole be held a cheapening of Shakespeare's work. Of course the great things of literature cannot be popularised. They must be spiritually discerned, and if not in virtual completeness, then not at all. The plan here is to reduce the difficulties, through making practicable units of approach, yet leave the study to be achieved wholly by the reader. No one wishing to find Shakespeare,

and willing with some patience to make the search, should fail of his quest.

The processes of literary interpretation, as has been implied, are not different in kind from such as are used by the commonest people every day. To interpret a novel is to find the characters, the motives, the human nature in it, just as we discover these same things by interpreting the faces and speech and actions of the men and women that we meet in outside life. It is harder to interpret the marks of character and passion in a novel than in real life, for they are fewer, and far less intense and striking. In the text of a play there are fewer signs of character and feeling than in a novel. To interpret a play we must expand the situations and dialogue into such phases and denominations of life as the novel uses. There is nothing in the drama, or the novel, or other forms of literature, that is not or may not be met with in the real experiences of living. The helps provided in this volume require the student to synthesise the whole, of which the given drama furnishes but a part.

The interpretation of a play.

Not all experiences of life are available for literature, however veritable and approved. Things that happen to everybody are not inspiring, and are not generally used in making plays and novels. Once when the struggle for life against outside foes was fierce, adventures and escapes were of greatest interest. Now that danger and hardship have been essentially eliminated, so that even the unfit survive, the general energy is no longer absorbed in a struggle for

mere existence. What mankind is now in search of is new and larger living, a greater quantum and a higher quality of existence. The multiplied services of society bring larger comforts, and these insure, or should insure, for those who render as well as those who enjoy them, an ampler domestic and personal living. Moreover, by a marvellous system of coöperation, we are putting each other in possession of the best that there is in ourselves and in humanity at large. In material society there is a strict law of *meum et tuum*. In the sphere of the spiritual there are very different postulates and principles. Under civil order, whatever belongings I have cannot become another's unless I resign them, or unless they are filched from me. But in the spiritual commonwealth there are no statutes of exclusion; we may covet what gifts and accomplishments we will. The worth that is in my neighbour's character may become mine, if I hunger and thirst for it, and it will remain no less his for enabling the like in me. An act of heroism that I would emulate becomes potentially my own; I rise by it to the level of the superior mind that conceived and compassed it. I care little for mediocre acts and thoughts of people, but the select sayings and inspiration, the unique goodness and worth of the world, I would have continually before me. The treasured form of such ideas and sentiments and achievements we call Literature. It perpetuates the best that men have found in the truest and noblest experiences of living. To be prepared to live, one must have been provided with

What all men seek.

the best and truest living attained or attainable hitherto. Literature is an institutional device by which society administers to itself its gains and discoveries of finest sentiment and sublimest thinking. To be educated is to be provided for living by acquaintance with the best life of the past; and this is available nowhere but in the thoughts and experiences that great men have bequeathed to us. It is the right, and should be the privilege, of those who come after to be equipped with the sum of what life has meant to the best who have lived before.

To be educated is to know the life of the past.

Shakespeare is useful to the world, and has come to be prized by wise men of all lands, because he was possessed of a profounder and completer knowledge of life than any author of books besides. He can thus supply to us experiences that we should never otherwise attain. He is capable of inspiring and enlightening us more abundantly than his rivals are, for the reason that he seems to have been acquainted with nobleness and worth in degree and variety beyond what other minds have known. It will not be easy to find Shakespeare except by discovering these qualities in his work. It will be of small profit to affirm that Shakespeare is this or this, that his moral attitude must have been such and such, if Shakespeare be not himself revealed and discerned, beyond his authorship, much as if he were living among us to-day. We have perhaps heard famous lecturers discourse patiently and eloquently to the effect that

What Shakespeare can supply to men.

Shakespeare is the greatest genius in all letters, that he has more imagination, that he employs more art, that he achieves more control over human sympathies than any other sage or poet. But all this has not brought us one whit nearer acquaintance with the man, or with his mind and power. We cannot be won to the appreciation or discipleship of Shakespeare by abstractions. We have not so learned our mothers, or the men and women whose lives have made us what we are.

Shakespeare, not imparted by abstractions.

It is therefore the purpose here to take some play or plays, such as our mentors must have had in mind, when they tried to administer Shakespeare to us, and test their spirit and purport just as if they had been written in the shape of novels, and by some modern master. We should choose creations that he put his heart into, and produced at times when he had least reason to exploit his gifts. What he makes the burden unequivocally of these plays, or any number of them, will presumably be something that he cares much for, or feels convinced of deeply, and will perhaps stand as an expression of what he would have life be or mean. Among such plays would, of course, be *Cymbeline*, and this it is proposed, first of all, to examine with some care. Incidentally, as we follow the chief meanings, we shall do well to watch for modes and devices by which these are severally administered, — that is, for Shakespeare's art, if there is any. In general, it will be requisite that we read each scene, in advance of treatment, and keep the open text at hand.

Plays that Shakespeare put his heart into.

# II

## CYMBELINE

### Act I

#### SCENE I

It will be well to have in mind at the beginning that *Cymbeline* is a British play, laid in pre-Christian times, and that the piece was not composed for the sake of King Cymbeline, the title character, but of his daughter Imogen. The opening lines are devoted to explaining who Imogen is, and making us acquainted with the circumstances under which she is to appear. In a drama everything that we need to know must be communicated to us incidentally, through the talk of certain characters, since the author cannot, as in most other kinds of literature, tell us anything directly. The device here is to bring forward a 'Second Gentleman,' newly arrived at the palace, and have him apprised in our hearing, by the 'First Gentleman,' as to what is going on at court. The First Gentleman is ostensibly attached to the King's household, but really has been created, along with his companion, on purpose to give us this information. Neither of them is needed afterward or appears again.

Use of the two Gentlemen.

The first sixty-nine lines thus serve as a sort of introduction to the play. Throughout the dialogue of the two Gentlemen the author is evidently at pains to

justify Imogen, by praises of Posthumus and of his family, for taking a husband so far beneath her rank. He now brings in his heroine. Her secret marriage with Posthumus has just been confessed to, and great is the commotion that it arouses. All the courtiers look displeased, while they inwardly rejoice that Imogen has rescued herself, for the time being, from the Queen's scheming. The King has wrathfully banished the husband, and ordered the bride to prison. The Queen ostensibly interposes in her stepdaughter's behalf, gives her the freedom of the palace, and proposes even to allow the lovers a leave-taking. But her falseness is wholly transparent — almost, indeed, ironical, as (ll. 70–79) her first words show: —

> No, be assur'd you shall not find me, daughter,
> After the slander of most stepmothers,
> Evil-ey'd unto you; you're my prisoner, but
> Your gaoler shall deliver you the keys
> That lock up your restraint. — For you, Posthumus,
> So soon as I can win the offended King,
> I will be known your advocate. Marry, yet
> The fire of rage is in him, and 'twere good
> You lean'd unto his sentence with what patience
> Your wisdom may inform you.

The reason of the Queen's suggestion to Posthumus, that he lean unto his sentence, is perhaps some fear lest he linger about the capitol disguised, and continue his witchcraft over her prisoner. Posthumus somewhat nervously, as if he had no rights or wish but the Queen's will, and without waiting for the least sign or word from Imogen, as to when or how

she may best bear the shock of parting, declares that he will hence to-day. Have we assumed that she is unnerved, prostrated, crushed? Let us hear (ll. 84–88) her speak.

> Dissembling courtesy! How fine this tyrant
> Can tickle where she wounds! My dearest husband,
> I something fear my father's wrath, but nothing —
> Always reserv'd my holy duty — what
> His rage can do on me. *You* must be gone.

The repose of Imogen.

The divinest thing in the world is the repose, the spiritual sufficiency which can forestall all the effect of wickedness and weakness. Lofty indeed and strong must be the mind of a princess whom, at such a moment, the pretended, exasperating considerateness of the Queen cannot disturb. She is able even to remark the effrontery of her inexorable tormentor who, 'so soon as she can win the offended King, will begin to plead for the return of the exile.' Most Imogens would have been upset to the point of prostration over that. We note, too, the dignity with which this bride of a week administers her affliction to herself by sending her husband away thus for his sake, his safety, 'not comforted to live save that there is left somewhere in the world the jewel that she perhaps may one day see again.' Not very ample consolation surely. But Imogen is content with what would break the hearts of most of her sex. There is no outcry, no swooning; there is but the putting of arms about her husband's neck, and the coming, now, of quiet tears. She would not else be woman.

Posthumus does not shine in comparison, though he is weak but relatively. He seems not to understand what moment has come to him, or how firm and sure he should now be to her who needs him and for the instant leans upon him. He should stand like a rock beneath her. He should contribute to her feminine sufficiency all his manly strength. He should be ready to stay by her, should she so will, forever. But he is ill at ease, and talks quite otherwise than in a sustaining way, while Imogen in silence hangs about him.

Posthumus weak but relatively.

The Queen now enters, on purpose probably to interrupt the lovers, and prevent any plans they may be making for fidelity from becoming too complete. The sight of Posthumus half trying to get free from Imogen, who does not stir at the intrusion, seemingly resolves her to bring the King in to see the spectacle. Posthumus is disquieted more than ever, and attempts to release himself with a commonplace adieu. Imogen, beautifully detaining him, misses nothing from his fervour, and appears not to notice his unrest. This parting is of infinite concern to her, and she has prepared for it. She takes from her bosom a resplendent ring, one of the royal jewels, worn at some time by her mother, though never, we may be sure, by her. It will make Posthumus conspicuous to wear it. It may endanger his safety, in exile, to be the owner of it; for, as a rule, only princes, in guarded palaces, display such treasures. But Imogen does not consider the ring too precious for a parting gift, or think it incongruous

Imogen unconscious of her rank.

that Posthumus should possess it. She does not remember that her mother was a queen, or that Posthumus has not yet been made a lord, or indeed a knight.

Posthumus knows his bride's mind too well to venture any protest. Now comes his turn. He has but an uncostly bracelet, which he knows Imogen so little as fairly to be ashamed of leaving with her as a keepsake. But he does recognise (ll. 118–123) his false position in being the lover of the royal heir.

> And, sweetest, fairest,
> As I my poor self did exchange for you,
> To your so infinite loss, so in our trifles
> I still win of you. For my sake wear this;
> It is a manacle of love. I'll place it
> Upon this fairest prisoner.

There is a very palpable difference between the tone of his utterances and of hers, and a difference surely not to his advantage. But we can understand how she has come to see in him her hero. Imogen realises that the moment of parting has been reached. Most feminine minds would now be quickened to some degree of prophetic penetration; but she has neither golden hopes of reunion nor forebodings of long or final separation. Her mind is not vividly or divinningly imaginative, but must work in a matter-of-fact way from absolute materials or conditions given. She will not be good at guessing riddles. The future is to her not dark, but merely hidden.

Imogen not of a sprightly imagination.

The scene is laid, according to the heading in our texts, in the garden of the King's palace, though the

first printed copies do not say so. The First Folio nowhere sets the scenes. But there is no question that the amendment is correct. The Queen, for instance, tells us (ll. 103, 104)[1] that she will move the King 'to walk this way,' which was evidently not along the corridors, or through rooms, inside. It thus appears that the Queen has arranged for the lovers a meeting-place commanded by the palace windows, so as to deny them privacy; or, rather, that Shakespeare, back of the Queen, ordains the situation in order that the King and his lords may have an opportunity to surprise the pair. This now they do, apparently, by coming up with stealthy steps. Posthumus leaps aside, though Imogen is unmoved; while the King rages, and with threatening gestures pursues Posthumus.

Why the scene laid in a garden.

Posthumus has certainly no ill-will toward anybody; he blesses the 'good remainders' of the court. He has small reason; for he must know that the Queen will attempt even yet to bring about the marriage of Imogen with Cloten, and that the King will never countenance him, under present domestic conditions, as a son-in-law. He hastens away, perhaps for the King's comfort, perhaps also for his own, and forgets the word of farewell to Imogen that he had hoped to say again. Imogen makes no outcry, feels no approach of swooning, and is not tempted to indulge herself in any martyrdom. In absolute self-control she bears her pain,

Imogen's absolute self-control.

[1] Line references here, and throughout, are to the numberings of the *Globe Shakespeare* text.

and still has strength to recognise that the sternest experiences of life are now upon her. Does the King hear her words? It seems not so. Imogen has no wish to enhance his passion, or betray how deeply his punishment afflicts her. Cymbeline, shaking with wrath, taunts her for disloyalty to his wishes. Imogen's perfect self-command is again exhibited. Over love matters it is not difficult for daughters to bandy words with irate sires. Imogen has no insolent or saucy phrases; and with a royal dignity that her father lacks begs him to shun the risk of mortal injury that excitement, at his years, may bring Even in his dotard devotion to the adventuress, who has alienated all the love he once bore to his daughter, she would guard him tenderly.

Cymbeline now betrays the degree (l. 138) to which his designing helpmeet has assumed control over his mind.

> That mightst have had the *sole son* of my Queen!

The implication that, were there other sons, any one of them would have been an enviable match for her, is exasperating enough. But Imogen will not lose her temper. Posthumus's blood of course is as good as the Queen's son's. Cymbeline accuses her of intending to make Posthumus his successor: —

> Thou took'st a beggar, wouldst have made my throne
> A seat for baseness.

Imogen does not deny that she is willing to see that outcome: 'No; I rather added a lustre to it.' When Cymbeline retorts that she is 'vile,' or 'of

low tastes,' Imogen has yet the grace (ll. 143–147) to answer quietly, and according to the verities, —

> Sir,
> It is your fault that I have loved Posthumus;
> You bred him as my playfellow, and he is
> A man worth any woman, overbuys me
> Almost the sum he pays.

To affirm that Posthumus has thrown away on her, the heir of all Britain, almost the whole of the purchase price, himself, who holds not so much as a foot of fief, is democratic and revolutionary enough to give the King a palsy. But he seems to be even parting with his violence under the influence of Imogen's firm looks and will. The absurd doctrine of the present court, that rank makes worth, and that Cloten may claim fitness for kingship on no sounder pretensions, forces her (ll. 148–150) to a protest, which, nevertheless, she makes meekly personal, and not critical or denunciatory: —

Imogen's clear seeing.

> Would I were
> A neat-herd's daughter, and my Leonatus
> Our neighbour shepherd's son!

There is hope surely for the race when women, born in kings' houses, and bred to luxury, see with such clearness, and stand for truth like that.

Pisanio, servant of Posthumus hitherto, now enters. His face shows concern, and the Queen seems to presume that he has news of interest to herself. And she is not wrong. As Posthumus went out from the palace garden, the Queen's son, Cloten, must

needs make an insolent, cowardly thrust upon him with his rapier, an instrument that Cloten handles none too well. But he has assaulted a master of that weapon; whereat Posthumus, good-naturedly, gives Cloten a few lively bouts for exercise. Gentlemen of the court, after a little enjoyment of the fun, with sober faces, have seen to it that Cloten receives no severe punishment for his folly, and have stopped the scandal. Imogen's amused contempt at the affront is said aloud: 'If your son were not under the protection of my father, he would not have escaped so comfortably. I wish that the two swordsmen were where they could not be parted, that I might hold them to an issue.' Imogen is not shocked at the idea of Cloten's getting the reward of his villany; she belongs to a duelling generation. But no woman has yet been born, having a husband of Posthumus's worth, but would be proud of his strong arm too. The Queen, until the outcome has been told, is evidently in a scare. Pisanio, now complimented insincerely by the Queen for past fidelity, is made to understand that he shall be continued in service to Imogen. The Queen proposes, by taking Imogen's part against the King, and by plying her with pretentious kindnesses, like this one, to persuade her to an annulment of her marriage; and she sends Pisanio out that she even now may employ the time. Imogen, who has given audiences before, and knows how long the Queen's reasons will hold out, tells Pisanio, in the Queen's

Cloten's assault upon Posthumus.

What the Queen purposes.

hearing, when he shall return. Thus has the author indicated to us to what extent Imogen is to be solicited, on this day of days, with her husband not yet gone, to wed his rival. With this, the scene in the palace garden, in which so much concerning the King's court, and of those who live there, has been revealed, is rounded to a close.

### SCENE II

The author of course made Cloten assault Posthumus, in the first scene, in order to set our feelings against him in advance. Cloten is to suffer a hard fate, and we are not to care. The treatment before us will not call for much penetration, or reading between the lines. When we have learned the Elizabethan terms and turns completely, the purport of the whole will be potentially in reach. The dialogue is in prose, the subject not warranting the metric form. Cloten has just been rescued from the fencing-bout, and is shown in a state of perspiration that little suits with a gentleman of his cloth. Posthumus has just disappeared from the scene; and the two Lords, who have posed in the affair as Cloten's seconds, are covering his disgrace with obsequious attentions.

Shakespeare's purpose in this situation is obviously to enact to us the degree of Cloten's imbecility. The fellow probably suspects that all has not gone exactly well with him, but the First Lord actually flatters him into thinking that he has covered himself with glory. The Second

The senselessness of Cloten.

Lord deepens the effect, somewhat awkwardly, it must be owned, by his sarcastic asides, through which his surcharged soul has vent. Cloten's conceit of greatness, since his mother married with the King, excludes all peers, all potentates from rivalry with himself. The Second Lord, seemingly for pity, — or is it conscience? — will contribute no word of praise or flattery to feed his pride. Only at the end does he venture speech, when Cloten insists that his friends shall not 'attend,' but walk abreast with him.

Evidently Shakespeare is not yet fully at work. Neither in this scene nor in the preceding does his hand suggest the cunning that it has known in most earlier plays. Particularly this plan of character contrasts, which presents first a scene of Imogen, and then of Cloten, and then of Imogen again, is unexampled in all his work elsewhere.

### SCENE III

Pisanio has come back from the harbour, where he saw Posthumus embark, and sail out into the offing. Imogen has been listening spell-bound to his report. The peculiar objectiveness of her mind is evident in the conception of Pisanio as becoming a fixture by the shore, and interrogating every sail, whether it have tidings from the exiled one. Then the very words last spoken are asked for, and the last gesture. Thus does the imagination of Imogen employ itself, gropingly and almost blindly, among details, having no wing for flight. The mention of the senseless linen that he

The objectiveness of Imogen's mind.

kissed, when her own lips might have contributed the responsiveness that it lacked, irks her with the thought of loss. Then sets in the conviction that there must have been something yet *to do*, which *she* had surely added, could she have been there in Pisanio's stead, — a sentiment beautiful, in this moment of desolation, even to pathos. Here is a bride, surely not of sympathy or affection merely, but of deeds (ll. 14–21): —

> *Imogen.* Thou shouldst have made him
> As little as a crow, or less, ere left
> To after-eye him.
> *Pisanio.* Madam, so I did.
> *Imogen.* *I* would have broke mine eye-strings, crack'd them but
> To look upon him, till the diminution
> Of space had pointed him sharp as my needle, —
> Nay, follow'd him till he melted from
> The smallness of a gnat to air, —

'and then, only, when there was nothing more of devotion to be rendered, I would have turned mine eye and wept!' Yet this devotion costs Imogen no regret or consciousness of sacrifice. Her joy is not in herself, and she is unaware how centrifugal is her living.

Posthumus's romantic nature.

Posthumus cannot forget that he has wedded a princess, though he is not without knowledge of her worth. There is somewhat of the romantic in his temperament, while of that quality Imogen conspicuously lacks. She is literally to him his queen, and he seems (*cf.* l. 5 above, and i. 92, 99) always to call her so. His brain is full of her social eminence, and of the glamour which, to

him, surrounds her goings. But Imogen, on the contrary, discerns all the hollowness of court magnificence. Her thoughts are not of the crown, rightfully hers, but of her needle, and this we may be sure (*cf.* l. 19, and i. 168) is at no time long absent from her hand.

Imogen has been well revealed before, in kind; plainly this scene is to paint her to us in degree. Pisanio, conceived apparently, for better sustainment of the proprieties, as of at least twice her years, is one to whom she may talk about Posthumus; and by way of him she is made to exhibit something of the purity and beauty of her spirit. While she cannot in visions follow her lover to Italy, she can appoint periods each day sacred to thoughts of him. So shall she yet have cares, with Posthumus absent, quite as were they not divided, and she had been his homekeeper. Noon, midnight, and the sixth hour of morn shall she be in heaven for him. Manifestly there shall not be much time for empty living, nor indeed for sleep. Then, that we may hear more, she is made to tell Pisanio of her incomplete leave-taking, — how she had contrived two words which she was to have administered as a charm, with her kiss between; but (ll. 35–37) then —

Imogen always wifely.

> comes in my father
> And, like the tyrannous breathing of the north,
> Shakes all our buds from growing.

Withal, the whole is told in no dialect of silliness, but in serious and lofty-minded diction.

The pretty story stops, for Imogen is sent for. Two interviews with the Queen in one day; we know for what.

SCENE IV

The plot must provide for Posthumus an honourable asylum.

The scene now shifts to Italy. Posthumus has been made to tell (*cf.* i. 97, 98) that his exile will be spent in Rome, at the house of his father's friend Philario. To provide him honourable entertainment, Shakespeare but makes Philario to have been under obligations (*cf.* i. 29–33) to Sicilius in certain Roman wars. The conversation among Philario's guests is of Posthumus, who has arrived but lately. It is known that he has married a king's daughter and been exiled for it; and these facts are regarded, not unnaturally, as discreditable to him as well as her. The Dutchman and the Spaniard are too slow of speech and mind to join in the dialogue, but we may safely account them not more charitable than the others. Philario feels it necessary to warn the company, as Posthumus comes in, against incivility to his friend. The Frenchman at once presents him eminence, both with eye and tongue, while Iachimo lies in wait. After half a dozen paragraphs comes (l. 56) his opportunity: —

> *Iachimo.* Can we, with manners, ask what was the difference?
>
> *Frenchman.* 'Safely, I think. It was a contention in public, which will, without gainsaying, bear being reported. It was much like the dispute that was precipitated last night, when we fell to praising

> the sweethearts of our respective countries; this gentleman at that time vouching, — and by an affirmation he would stand to with his sword, his to be fairer, more virtuous, wiser, more chaste, better provided with the quality of constancy, and less temptable than any rarest of our ladies in France.'

This foolish praise was uttered, years before, in earliest foreign travel. The author thinks too much of his heroine to give her a husband who would say it now. But the occasion is sufficient for Iachimo; he thus administers the first stroke of his Machiavellian craft: —

> That lady is not now living, or the gentleman's opinion by this worn out.

Posthumus, as we should judge to-day, was under no obligation so strong as to hold his peace, and keep his wife's honour from being bandied about in such a company. But Posthumus feels that he must vindicate the integrity of his lady at any cost to him or her. Such was the sentiment of the old chivalry, not yet dead in Shakespeare's times. He answers stiffly, —

> She holds her virtue still, and I my mind.

Posthumus, from now on, is easy game. Some good angel should have warned him against contention with one of Iago's breed. He thinks he is dealing forbearingly with an honest man. Iachimo will need but to goad him gently, to make him lose his head, and bring him under full control; and this will his pursuer do, though we cannot yet see why. What Briton could have detected the strategy in this rejoinder?

Posthumus no match for the wily Italian.

You must not so far prefer her fore ours of Italy.

Posthumus has not said anything about the young women of Italy, but of course cannot remember his words exactly. He is not combative, and tries to withdraw with a general remark, which, under right circumstances, would have left all well. But Iachimo will not have it so. He has caught sight of the ring on Posthumus's finger, and probably recognises that this untitled and portionless bridegroom can have come by it only through his marriage with a king's daughter. Iachimo will have the Queen's jewel, and make a guy of Posthumus besides.

Iachimo will have the Queen's jewel.

> '*As* fair and *as* good — a kind of poised comparison — had been something *too* fair and *too* good for any lady in *Britain*. If she went before others I have seen, as that diamond of yours outlustres many I have beheld, I could not but believe she excelled many; but I have not seen the most precious diamond that is, nor you the lady.'

Iachimo very deftly covers his interest in the ring, which he implies he has seen surpassed in brilliancy. He has not aroused Posthumus by the animus made so plain in his last utterance. He now (l. 94) tries sarcasm: —

Which the gods have given *you?*

But even this taunt fails to exasperate the fiefless and homeless wanderer. Iachimo follows with an insinuation: —

You may wear her *in title* yours, —

at which Posthumus very neatly turns his flank: —

'Your Italy contains no so accomplished a courtier to vanquish the honour of my mistress, if, in the holding or loss of *that*, you term her frail. I do nothing doubt you have store of thieves; notwithstanding, I fear not for my ring.'

Philario attempts now to stop the dialogue. He understands of course what Iachimo is about, and is bound to protect his guest. Posthumus ventures some pungent comments on Iachimo's manners, which, were he not shameless, would silence him. But the fellow, Iago-like, makes an advantage out of the rebuff: —

*Posthumus.* 'This worthy signior — I am much obliged to him — is not at all inclined to be formal with me: we have been familiar from the very first moment.'

*Iachimo.* 'With five times so much conversation, I should get ground of your fair mistress, make her retreat, even to the surrender, had I admittance and opportunity as a help.'

*Posthumus.* No, no.

*Iachimo.* I dare thereupon pawn the moiety of my estate to your ring, which, in my opinion, o'ervalues it something.

We see that the ring has considerably appreciated, since Iachimo's first mention of it. He needs to flatter Posthumus now. On his outrageous pretensions of being a lady-killer, Posthumus, in chivalrous and indignant defence of the sex he is slandering, reads him a pretty vigorous lesson: —

*Posthumus.* 'You are greatly deceived in allowing yourself to believe any such thing; and I don't doubt you are habitually sustaining what you deserve by your attempts.'

*Iachimo.* What's that?

*Posthumus.* 'A repulse; though your attempt, as you call it, deserves more, — a castigation, too.'

Philario at this point interferes; for Posthumus is getting excited, and Iachimo is mercilessly crowding him to his doom. The conversation has dwindled to this one topic, while Philario would have it general. But Iachimo does not mind Philario, who has no present power of calling him to account.

*Iachimo.* Would I had put my estate *and my neighbour's* on the approbation of what I have spoken.

*Posthumus.* *What* lady would you choose to assail?

*Iachimo.* *Yours*, who in constancy you *think* stands so safe. I will lay you *ten thousand ducats*, to your ring, that, commend me to the court where your lady is . . . I will bring from thence that honour of hers which you imagine so reserved.

*Posthumus.* I will wage against your gold, *gold to it.* My ring I hold dear as my finger; 't is part of it.

Posthumus has no chance of getting together ten thousand ducats, but in his present condition of mind he thinks he has, and declares he will cover the bet. To part with his ring, merely while it shall lie in pledge, he cannot think of doing. Iachimo has but to taunt him with being really unconfident of his wife, to bring him (ll. 146–149) to the terms proposed: —

'You are *afraid;* I *see* that you have some apprehensions about the hereafter in you, — that you are really *afraid.*'

Posthumus cannot longer contain himself. Ring or no ring, he must beat the fellow, and punish him; and

of course he shall soon have his ring back from the stake-holder.

> 'Let there be covenants drawn between us. My mistress exceeds in worth even the mammoth proportions of your evil thinking. I *dare* you to this match. Here's my ring!'

Philario calls out that he will not have the dispute end in a bet, but Iachimo slaps his leg, and cries, much louder, By the gods, *you're too late;* it *is* one.

> 'If I come off, and leave her such as you trust her, she your jewel, this your jewel, and my gold are yours: provided I have your endorsement for my more convenient admittance and reception.'

Very slyly has the author contrived to attach the last clause as a rider to the whole; on it will depend the access of Iachimo to the British court. Posthumus cannot realise what he is assenting to. Like a gambler, with the mad expectation of winning, he is carried away captive by the cool avarice of his adversary, who knows how the dice are loaded. That ring is too grand a thing for the hand of a friendless and witless upstart, like this stranger, to be wearing. Then there is besides, for Iachimo, the excitement of an adventure to look forward to. Meanwhile poor Imogen, badgered, heartsore, and worn, bearing the chief burdens of this separation, in far-off Britain, little dreams that her husband has been forced, in sheer defence of her honour, to consent that an Iachimo shall cross her path.

Such is the evolution of Iachimo's plot to see Imogen, and of Posthumus's willingness to stake her

ring. The scene has, perhaps, read in certain moods, seemed long, and perhaps indeed unnecessary. But it is vital to the play, and is really shorter than most other dramatists, accomplishing as much, could have devised. To be sure, it is not a pleasant story; but Shakespeare has made it as free from offensiveness as he could. An Iachimo of real life would have said much coarser things.

The scene indispensable to the plot.

SCENE V

The Queen is now discovered to us with her court ladies and chief physician: a rather unusual grouping, since there is no one ill. The Queen has been exhibited pretty effectually already, and we wonder why we are to have her before us, as the chief figure, in another scene. There is to be a flower-gathering excursion, perhaps beyond the palace gardens, but not of the usual sort, not for the pleasure of it; and the Queen has prepared, to assist her purpose, a formal list. Did ever women, in reach of flowers with the dew on them, behave before like this? Save the stepdame, we may safely assume that no one of the company would have done so here.

The Queen further characterised.

As soon as the court ladies are out of hearing, the Queen asks the physician concerning drugs, which he has been commissioned to procure. These he seems to give her. But it is at once made known to us that they are poisons, and of a kind that Shakespeare's generation were more familiar with than we, such, namely,

as produce death with certainty, but so remotely after administering as quite to prevent detection of the poisoner, or the time and manner of his deed. We are inclined to be sceptical about such poisons now, but the audiences for whom this play was written most steadfastly believed in them. Edward VI, it was held by many, had died by this means. The doctor is made, not very deftly, to disclose the character of these drugs, through asking the Queen why she has required them, since it is an inquiry made most naturally before complying.

Italian poisons.

The Queen by her response arouses our suspicion very strongly. She has been the doctor's pupil, and preëminently before her marriage, when she was acquiring certain accomplishments, one of which seems to have recommended her to the King's imagination. Now, very lately, probably since Posthumus's going, she has conceived it well to amplify her judgment in other conclusions. She admits that she intends to use the drugs poisonously, but not on human creatures. Yet, as Pisanio enters, she declares that he shall be the subject of her first experiment. What she means to do eventually, with the crown in prospect, need not be more broadly hinted.

The Queen wooed for her confections.

The careless construction of the play is evident in the asides. The author uses one of these to bring out from the doctor the explanation that the drugs are not deadly after all. On accomplishing this, Shakespeare is through with him, and makes the Queen dismiss him, that

The careless construction of the play.

she may talk of Imogen to Pisanio. Her (l. 46) first inquiry, —

Weeps she *still*, say'st thou? —

eloquently betrays that she is becoming pretty effectually acquainted with her prisoner, and that she begins to despair of winning Imogen away from Posthumus to Cloten. She confidently affirms that Posthumus's plight is more hopeless than ever, and hints broadly that pressure is being brought to bear upon Philario, to make him withdraw his hospitality. This, however, we are forced to conclude, is merely falsehood. The Queen has no respect for the intelligence of such as she would make her dupes; and she plies Pisanio with the most outrageous patronising. To complete the flattery, she drops, as by accident, the box of drugs, and Pisanio, springing with courtly alacrity to restore it to her, is bidden keep it for his pains. With ready mendacity, she declares that she has saved the King's life five times already with that medicine. Pisanio is naturally disinclined to keep so precious a cordial, but the Queen entreats. Quite evidently this box of drugs will be heard of later in the plot.

The Queen now sends for the women, who reënter bearing large bundles of fresh blossoms. But the Queen does not feel prompted to smell or handle any, not even of the violets, which, alone, with the cowslips and primroses, she has carried to her laboratory. Will she distil court perfumes from them, — or is it all a blind?

The purpose of the scene is thus the twofold one of introducing the ruse of the physician as a factor

in the plot, and of exhibiting the Queen's character in degree; the latter having been already, in Scene i, presented to us in kind.

### SCENE VI

Will the author force us to witness the infamous wooing of Imogen by Iachimo? He will not omit it; not because he will joy to write it, or because he does not care for our feelings, or thinks we need to see his heroine tried. He would save her this interview with Iachimo if by any means he might. But he wishes us to know what influence can be wrought upon Iachimo by an Imogen. The scene opens with a mood of dejection and tears. The weeks of the Queen's very civil but persistent solicitation drag heavily. There is no golden promise in the sky to which she looks. But she will live true to herself, no matter if in a neatherd's cottage.

Iachimo to be influenced by Imogen.

> Blest be those,
> How mean soe'er, that have their honest wills,
> Which seasons comfort.

She cries out in dismay; for there is a nobleman approaching whom she does not know. Her eyes are red, and she would see no stranger. But Pisanio, asking no leave, evidently because of some message or commission from Posthumus, brings the guest before her. At mention of her lord, the colour comes back to her pale cheek.

Iachimo has long been practised in the effects of boldness. He should, as Posthumus's friend, show

himself most chivalrous and worshipful here; but Imogen, though a king's daughter, hears no false note (ll. 11–13) in the first words: —

> *Change* you, madam?
> The worthy Leonatus is in safety,
> And greets your highness dearly.

Iachimo evidently knows how to address a young wife whose husband is in exile. He affects to be acquainted with the contents of the letter that he presents, as if he were of Posthumus's counsel. So far, he has advantaged himself by the interview; he has impressed Imogen as of an obtrusive, compelling personality. In her weary and heart-sick frame of mind she no doubt dreads the presence of such a man, and in so far he has subordinated her. Iachimo, for his part, has been surprised and dismayed at the repose and strength of her patrician bearing. Perhaps the dames of Italy have the habit of meeting his impudent, commanding gaze with looks full of mischief and challenge; his boastings to Posthumus cannot have meant much less. But here is a type of womanhood that does not know and cannot guess what such manners mean. Iachimo begins to feel the stir of something like reverence within: —

Imogen at first subordinated.

> All of her that is out of door, most rich!
> If she be furnish'd with a mind so rare,
> She is alone the Arabian bird, and I
> Have lost the wager. Boldness be my friend!
> Arm me, audacity, from head to foot!
> Or, like the Parthian, I shall flying fight;
> Rather, directly fly.

When was this man ever persuaded before of so much as the existence of the phenix of virtue? It makes him obviously uncomfortable to anticipate the rôle that he must undertake. Imogen for the moment has been lost in her husband's letter. Posthumus has fulfilled his part of the diabolic compact. We wonder indeed how he could say, except in a quibble, that he is infinitely tied to Iachimo's kindnesses. Imogen reads to her guest the last words of the letter, as a means of paying him the respect which her husband bespeaks, and partly because she would not be selfishly absorbed in her own joys. Her mood toward him is altered. Why, here is instead of a stranger a dear friend of her husband, one who has sweetened his homelessness and desolation with gracious offices. Being the matter-of-fact, domestic creature that we know, she has no doubt begun already to cast about for means of entertaining him. But she remembers that she is in effect a prisoner. Has her husband hinted to his friend that her liberty in her father's house is scanted? We catch clearly (ll. 29–31) the note of perplexity: —

> You are as welcome, worthy sir, as I
> Have words to bid you, and shall find it so
> In all that I can do.

But Iachimo little dreams how the lady's mind is cumbered for him, at this rare moment, in noble hospitality; he is too absorbed in his pitiable attempt to fascinate her. He proceeds, scrutinising her beauty of face and figure, in a sexless, almost an inventorying

Iachimo cannot bring himself to pretend to an amorous mood.

mood, to make comments of surprise. He expects to be understood as implying that large distinctions of charm, palpable enough to him, are not discerned by another pair of eyes, of course Posthumus's. But in this, which would have made another sort of princess understand that she was despised and rejected, and in favour of a rival vastly her inferior, Imogen sees nothing, suspects nothing, and is objective enough even to ask what makes the wonder. Iachimo essays to grow more pointed, and hints broadly that there are two between whom her husband chooses. Imogen's obtuseness grows, and Iachimo, perhaps somewhat from the fear that he is being made game of in the presence of her servant, manages to invent a reason for sending that supernumerary out. But after Pisanio's exit, the same honest, earnest eyes rest upon Iachimo, and while he waits perhaps to recover his inspiration, he hears (l. 56) an inquiry not anticipated in the letter: —

> Continues well my lord? His health, beseech you?

The language enforced by Imogen from Iachimo.

Iachimo has exhausted his boldness. Little indeed has come of it. Nothing is more remarkable than the severely proper language in which the presence of this woman has forced him to clothe his effrontery. Has he ever maintained such speech for so long before to man or woman? Not a syllable of real coarseness has passed his lips. His next expedient, the attempt to arouse jealousy having failed, is to assure Imogen of Posthumus's levity. She has asked if her

husband keeps cheerful. That furnishes the cue; and (ll. 59–61) the answer is, —

> *Exceeding pleasant;* none a stranger there
> So *merry* and so *gamesome.* He is call'd
> The Briton *reveller.*

How would it make most brides feel to be assured that their exiled husbands were mysteriously and boisterously gay? It would be but in keeping that Posthumus should maintain a lenten soberness for Imogen's sake, while she is suffering for his sake, being deprived of her liberty even more than he has been deprived of his. But Imogen has no such envy as to require that her husband endure the same sorrow as herself. She believes what Iachimo tells her, and does not understand it, yet finds it all right to her. She remembers, however, that it was once not so with him: —

> When he was *here*
> He did incline to *sadness,* and oft-times
> Not knowing why.

There is so much of Gothic repose, of Madonna-like high-mindedness and renunciation that it is strange Iachimo can go on. There is sadness enough, we may be sure, in the eyes that are looking upon him now, trying to find the truth that this messenger is so unwilling to declare. The destroyer of her peace reports that her husband makes insinuations against her and all her sex, but the anxious, inquiring look seems not to change. Iachimo affirms broadly, and no doubt with a knowing shrug that would compromise a saint, that some men are much to blame. But when

Imogen asks, with dawning dismay, if he means her husband, he is forced (l. 78) to answer No: —

> *Not* he; but heaven's bounty towards him might
> Be us'd more thankfully. In himself, 'tis much;
> In *you* [it], which I account his, [is] beyond all talents.
> Whilst I am bound to *wonder*, I am bound
> To *pity* too.
>
> *Imogen.* *What* do you pity, sir?
> *Iachimo.* Two creatures heartily.

But the innuendo does not take. Imogen is hopelessly obtuse. She cannot be roused, as the Italian donna would have been aroused insanely, long before, to a jealous mood. Instead, remembering perhaps how these weeks since her husband's exile must have told upon her features, — for even an Imogen cares when her cheek is pale and wasted, — she anxiously inquires, —

Imogen's concern for her pale looks.

> Am *I* one, sir?
> You look on me. What wrack discern you in me
> Deserves your pity?

Iachimo answers darkly, that it is all as if he were to hide from the radiant sun, and get solace in a dungeon by the dying light of an unsnuffed candle. But not only does this inexplicable British woman fail to get the hint again; she even turns on him with a Juno's dignity, and demands the reason for his presumption: —

> I pray you, sir,
> Deliver with *more openness* your answers
> To my demands. *Why* do you pity me?

None but one of the breed of Iago, who dared to sport with the enraged Othello, would have risked

further impertinence with this princess. Iachimo thinks that one dark saying more will complete the mischief. He utters but certain significant words of this, affecting to halt aghast at the enormity of what is left unsaid. Imogen does not grow incensed, feeling it now wrong to fall out with the bearer of her news. She begs him to tell plainly what he has come to report to her.

Iachimo is Italian in nothing so much perhaps as ingenuity. It is no hardship for him to suffer a check like this; else were he dismayed and resourceless now. He ventures some hint of compliment to this lady's cheek and hand and eye, but he is very worshipful and distant in it all. Imogen is not one whose beauty it will do to praise openly: that Iachimo has read aright. Otherwise he would have made sonnets to her eyebrow from the first. His attempt to declare plainly, as Imogen has asked, how she is wronged, is deftly subordinated to his chivalrous admiration. Nothing so well measures the power of her presence, of her pure and anxious countenance, as the lofty indirectness with which Iachimo addresses her at this moment. The gist at last is clear: Posthumus has fallen below himself, — if this friend says true; and Imogen cannot think that he is uttering falsehood. She is too unselfish, too noble to feel the wrong done to herself. There is no trace of jealousy, no wish to extort pain for pain. But Iachimo assumes that, since she is woman, such must be her feelings, and he prepares to use them to his profit. Italian great dames feel

Iachimo ventures only distant compliments.

such passions, and ply dagger and poison on no better evidence.

Iachimo, blinded by his mistake and his success, pushes on. He risks another compliment. 'Not I, inclined to this tale-bearing, pronounce the beggary of his change, but 'tis *your graces* that charm this story out.' That, in Imogen's eyes, amounts to flattery, and seems (l. 117) to flash on her the falseness of his mind: —

> Let me hear no more!

But Iachimo grows frantic in his anxiousness for this wronged lady. Were Imogen at all aware of the dramatic craftiness of his race, his zeal would have wrought no pause to her indignation. But the fervour and the poignant concern on Iachimo's face deceive her for a moment yet.

> O *dearest soul!* Your cause doth *strike my heart*
> With *pity*, that doth *make me sick*. A lady
> So fair, and fasten'd to an empery [that]
> Would make the great'st king double.

This could not but make an impression upon a British gentlewoman's credulity, though it would scarcely have deceived an Italian lass of ten. The suggestion besides of Posthumus's ingratitude, that he is lavishing his princess-wife's treasures upon dissolute companions, will carry, as Iachimo believes, a maddening sting. There is need now, he thinks, but to hint of reprisals. But, marvel of marvels, this woman has (ll. 128–132) no most distant suspicion of what he means: —

*Reveng'd!*
How *should* I be reveng'd? *If* this be true, —
As I have such a heart that both mine ears
Must not in haste abuse, — *if it be true,*
How *should I* be *reveng'd?*

Iachimo's humiliation is not complete. He must explain again, deliver with more openness what he would have her know. It were enough surely that he had said

Should he make *me*, —

but Iachimo goes on, rounding out a paragraph that Imogen lets him finish, to be sure that her ears do not mistake. Then, immediately, she calls her serving-man. Iachimo, believing, or affecting to believe this but a last feint of dissent, advances to attempt a kiss. Then (l. 141) he learns what the situation is.

*Away!* I do condemn *my ears* that have
So long attended thee. If thou wert honourable,
Thou wouldst have told this tale *for virtue, not*
For such an end [as] thou seek'st, — *as base as strange.*
Thou wrong'st a gentleman who is *as far*
From thy report *as thou* from *honour*, and
Solicit'st here a lady that *disdains*
*Thee* and *the devil alike. What, ho, Pisanio!*

Imogen not chagrined by Iachimo's insolence.

Imogen feels no sensitiveness or indignation that such a thing has happened to her, never thinks what the world would say if it only knew, and probably administers this divine rebuke without a blush. The sublime repose of her nature is even yet unshaken. She has not believed the slander against her husband, she has exposed the foolish villany of this sorry fellow, and put

him to a lifelong shame. Were she as once wholly in her father's favour, her triumph would be complete. She will not feign the royal vindication, she merely presumes it; but Iachimo finds in it undoubtedly none the less a menace. It is all in all an incident that Imogen will forget quickly, or will remember, because inexplicable, without trepidation or regret.

How an Italian, even of this Iago stamp, could muster courage to unsay his sayings, surpasses Anglo-Saxon knowledge. But even this (ll. 162–165) is within the rôle of an Iachimo.

> *Give* me your pardon!
> I have spoke this to know if your affiance
> Were deeply rooted, and shall make your lord,
> That which he is, new o'er.

Imogen is not surprised to hear her husband praised; her repose is undisturbed even by this contradiction. Iachimo, getting in acknowledgment but the words 'You make amends,' goes on with unction to extort from the princess at least more than that. He adds more praises, and with Italian grace and deference asks pardon. But while he is exploiting himself in this half-frantic effort, which wins from her (l. 179) only the laconic and almost ironic answer, —

> All's well, sir. Take my power i' the court for yours, —

he is evidently divining a new matter. 'If the creature is as devoted to her husband as this comes to, why, just through that devotion can she be tricked into compromising conditions that will save me yet the wager.

Imogen is to be defeated through her devotion.

She is infatuated enough to lavish fondness upon anything that her husband cares for, and will be blind to every strategy that purports to honour him.' Iachimo's fetch is on the instant ready: —

> *Iachimo.* My humble thanks. I had almost forgot
> To entreat your grace but in a small request,
> And yet of moment too, for it concerns
> Your lord.
> *Imogen.* Pray, what is it?
> *Iachimo.* Some dozen Romans of us, *and your lord,* —

Now all is different. The young princess-bride shows animation; her wonderful statuesque repose is well-nigh lifted. Here is something to *do*, a chance for love and devotion to express themselves as other than mere sentiments: —

> Willingly,
> And pawn mine honour for their safety. Since
> My lord hath interest in them, I will keep them
> In my bedchamber.

Of course. Iachimo has divined rightly that Imogen cannot do less than keep guard over the treasure that she believes is in part her husband's. He shall need but to hint at the trouble it will cause her, — 'only for this night,' — to make her beg for a longer service. It is the only happiness that has come to her since Posthumus went away. She even prays Iachimo not to go to-morrow! Iachimo explains that he has been carried out of his way by his promise to see her, and Imogen, though reminded thus of how it has been kept, has so far forgotten as to hint again that she would have him stay. Iachimo is in no danger of flattering himself

Imogen anxious to keep the trunk longer.

that it is his presence which she finds acceptable; that he knows too well is the occasion, not the cause. So, by way of Iachimo's Machiavellian wit and of Imogen's objective affection, the author has gained approach to the palace and to Imogen's apartments, for the trunk, as demanded by the plot.

Clearly, outside of its plot significance, this is an important part of the play. We have seen this British princess, unintendingly, without effort, and, indeed, unconsciously, compel a man who has no respect for woman, and who has affected even to believe himself a universal fascinator, conceive a very deep respect for her, and for her sex through her. She knows no surprises; she is so at one in her integrity with the eternal right that she thinks no evil and feels no need to vindicate herself against it. She has filled Posthumus with a sense of her truth and strength. It grows clearer how he could consent that this Iachimo should cross her path; he knew that what we have seen happen is what would happen. It is not much marvel, then, that he has called this wife of his, being unable to separate her rank and birth from her personality, persistingly a queen.

Iachimo forced to respect Imogen and her sex.

## Act II

### SCENE I

There are unpleasant residues of Cloten's character to be shown; and it is the author's pleasure, while we wait the outcome of Iachimo's effort with the trunk, to open some

Cloten belated in dissipation.

of them to us. Cloten is a man past thirty, and has apparently been so belated in his wild-oats sowing as to covet every opportunity of dissipation. He lays hundred-pound bets upon his bowling, swears roundly when he loses, and knocks down with his bowl the man who rebukes him for his oaths. The rank that his mother's marriage has brought him, entitles him to commit offences upon his inferiors, and insures him immunity for any species of behaviour. The First Lord, we notice, has tired, seemingly, since his former appearance with Cloten, of his flattery; and the Second Lord speaks aloud this time in an occasional phrase of irony. The scene is closed with a soliloquy, in which the author makes sure that the slowest of his audience understands everything, except the Iachimo episode, that has been essayed thus far.

SCENE II

Iachimo ended his interview with Imogen, apparently, when it was yet daylight. Imogen finished the letters for her husband something before nine o'clock, which was the time of her retiring. She has been reading in bed, as seems her habit, during the three hours since. This is clearly meant to establish her to us as of an intellectual and literary cast of mind. Of course, most ladies of rank are of this sort to-day. But in Shakespeare's times there were few reading women. Only Lady Jane Grey and Elizabeth, and some rare spirits besides, had, to Shakespeare's knowledge, bothered themselves much with books.

Imogen, like Lady Jane Grey, and Elizabeth, a reader.

There was, moreover, not much to read. People who nowadays can sit down to a fresh book or magazine every evening, little realise the dearth of edifying literature, then, at least for lady readers. We note here also, that, while Imogen has waiting women to execute her least behest, she is yet as wifely as if she were her own housekeeper. She wishes to be waked at dawn, after four hours' sleep, that she may resume her cares. She is (ll. 8–10), withal, devout, —

> To your protection I commend me, gods!
> From fairies, and the tempters of the night,
> Guard me, beseech ye!

But her prayers are vain. Already in the trunk, which is doubtless placed where she can see it most conveniently, lies in wait a relentless enemy. Had she been curious, had she demanded to see the gift of plate that her husband contributed some of her money to procure, perhaps Iachimo's stratagem would have failed. But she has surely not asked to see it, being content to keep it and guard it, and feel it near. Had she been less matter-of-fact and practical, she might have divined by the modes of telepathy, or in some other way, that her doom was here. But she is alone with her integrity and sweet devotion. She sleeps.

Imogen not curious to see the gift of plate.

It is past, much past two o'clock. The trunk-lid rises softly. Iachimo is no chicken-hearted dabbler in criminality, but he feels instantly, as he lifts his head and emerges into the perfumed and silent chamber, the influences of the place. Tarquin, he at once

fancies, must have moved thus gently, and felt himself just such a monster. He has come to note down in detail the furnishings and belongings of the room; but the intensity of his impressions makes that unnecessary. The taper that the waiting woman left lighted discovers to us the arms of the sleeper lying bare upon the counterpane, and the bracelet of Posthumus. But how chances she to be wearing this bracelet even when sleeping? Her lover did not ask her to keep it always upon her arm. But he promised that her ring should not part from his finger; so she, without promising or even telling, wears thus his bracelet. Iachimo at once sees the importance of such a token and unclasps it. Were Imogen less profoundly locked in slumber, she would probably have felt the movement or the loss. But her habit of denying herself what she thinks unnecessary sleep, prevents her waking.

The Elizabethans wore no night clothing after retiring. Hence it chances here, the coverlet being drawn a little by the sleeper's arm, that the crimson mark over the left breast is disclosed. The knowledge of this, Iachimo feels, is the lady's doom: she will be proved unfaithful, and her husband will be lost to her. The work of the visit has been accomplished. The ring shall be his own. But the sureness of victory brings a changed feeling toward his victim: it comes over him what a woman this is. With his Italian penetration he sees her as we see her, knows her as we know her. He cares nothing for what shall

Iachimo sees Imogen as we see her.

ensue to her, but he would be removed from her, from the sight of her *at once*, as far as possible. There is no need of hurrying, there is every reason why he should not withdraw to his cramping and suffocating covert for a long time yet. But, as in a panic, he retreats precipitately to enter the trunk again, and even (l. 47) lock the lid down upon himself: —

> Swift, *swift*, you dragons of the night, that dawning
> May bare the raven's eye ! *I lodge in fear;*
> Though *this* a heavenly angel, *hell is here.*

He knows that he runs no least risk of detection, or punishment, yet he trembles with a vague, inexplicable dread. He is sensible of only this, that, while here is an angel who should inaugurate the presence of heaven, he finds hell instead. It is the hell, could he but know, that a woman's, such a woman's greatness of soul, can establish within a man, when he has put himself at variance with it. The quick, almost spiteful strokes of the clock, *one*, *two*, *three*, furnish a powerfully dramatic close.

Of course in a play everything of moment must be enacted; that is, must be brought to pass visually to the audience. We need to know here just how Iachimo got the evidence he wanted. In addition, the author wishes to show us more completely what influences a pure, grand woman can exert, by mere presence, because of instinctive reverence in his sex for these qualities, upon a strong man who is allied with evil. In this spiritual subordination of wrong to truth, he leaves the pair.

But the play, as we have undoubtedly been aware, moves slowly. We have taken two pages to explain one. Yet this, in the case of genuine literature, is always necessary; for the much is presented potentially in little. A work of literary genius is always thus potential, and must be spiritually discerned. The expansion of what is spiritually discerned into concrete details is what is called Interpretation. In an artist's work there are hints or proofs of generic qualities, which the discerning mind realises and enlarges. There may be time later to discuss with some definiteness how this is done.

### SCENE III

Cloten systematically fleeced.

Cloten was of course unsuccessful in his attempt to find Iachimo last night to gamble with; that distinguished guest having managed to offer an excuse for disappearing. But Cloten did not lose the evening, nevertheless; the brace of companions with whom we have seen him hitherto have stayed by him, and relieved him of his allowance from the King's treasury. The time is daybreak — the spring season with which the play opened having now advanced almost to June — and Imogen's waiting-woman has just aroused her mistress.

When not in the depths of dissipation, Cloten is pressing his suit to Posthumus's wife, though he wooes, it would seem, mainly by proxy. He has arranged for a serenade to Imogen, his mother having apparently advised that he try music o' mornings,

— "they say it will penetrate." But he has hit upon the most unpropitious day in all the calendar; for Imogen is in deep vexation at the loss of her bracelet, at once missed on waking. It is a vexation not to be much allayed, we may be sure, by the attentions or presence of Cloten at this untimely hour.

The musicians sing an exquisite song, one stanza of it, and go away with an unprincely fee. Perhaps if they had been called back, and paid more fittingly, they would have rendered the two songs, in full, as they were bid. But, obviously, the single verse is better. Shakespeare does not treat his audience to episodes, or this singing might otherwise have become one. In lieu of response from Imogen's apartments, Cymbeline and the Queen appear, we wonder why. The hour is absurdly early for such as sleep in king's houses to be stirring, and especially for a sovereign of Cymbeline's years. We shall probably remember that the author has been introducing Imogen and Cloten just after each other, and has brought about relations between them not well adapted to a scene in common. But they are now to have their first interview in our sight. To mitigate the antagonism, as well as to give Cloten in a measure the royal warrant, the King has been somewhat unnaturally worked into the scene. The whole is dignified and strengthened by the report, introduced by a messenger, that Roman ambassadors are awaiting audience.

Shakespeare does not indulge in episodes.

Cloten lingers about the doors of Imogen, determined to secure some recognition of his serenade,

and of course soliloquises; an actor cannot wait speechless upon the stage. His talk consists mainly of obvious propositions; here he advises with himself concerning the power of gold. One of Imogen's women appears. How Cloten is regarded by court serving-folk is hinted clearly enough by the way she fools with him. Imogen has apparently heard the knocking, and guessed the visitor. The mistress of this part of the palace seems not unwilling to respond in person this morning to the challenge.

Cloten presumes but to call her sister.

Cloten may now recommend himself in person. What resources will he show? How manfully and gracefully will he woo? Here we find unequivocally his measure; or, shall we not say, it is the measure of the influence Imogen's presence and face exerts upon him? He salutes her *as his sister!* He has the right to kiss her hand without the asking; he calls her fairest; but to put himself hopelessly out of the rôle of wooer by assuming to approach but as a brother shows how he weakens. But brother or wooer is, in her present mood, all the same to Imogen. Were she inclined to mischief, she would have taken him at his word, and insisted upon his confining himself to brotherly behaviour ever after. She is both too literal and too angry (ll. 92–95) to think of irony: —

> Good morrow, sir. You lay out too much pains
> For purchasing but trouble. The thanks I give
> Is telling you that I am poor of thanks,
> And scarce can spare them.

Cloten should have caught the pitch of feeling in

this deliverance. But he must needs make a declaration, "Still I swear I love you." Imogen listens soberly, almost stoically, and deprecates with considerate sincerity, though vainly: —

> If you but *said* so, 'twere as deep with me;
> If you *swear still*, your recompense is *still*
> That I *regard* it *not*.
> *Cloten.* This is no answer.
> *Imogen.* But that you shall not say I yield, being silent,
> I would not speak. I pray you, spare me. 'Faith,
> I shall unfold equal discourtesy
> To your best kindness. One of your great knowing
> Should learn, being taught, forbearance.

Imogen is approaching the limit of her patience. She pleads to be let alone; she indulges in a hint of irony. But Cloten has no suspicion of jeopardy, and goes on: —

> To leave you in your madness, 'twere my sin:
> I *will* not.

Immediately his punishment comes. 'How can *you* know anything about madness? *Fools* are not mad folks.'

The author (l. 58) has shown Cloten sensitive over certain words, as 'senseless,' when applied to himself. Cloten was once a boy, and had probably companions; and such companions sometimes use exceeding plainness of speech toward one another. At any rate Cloten is scandalised over the possible pertinence of Imogen's remark: —

> Do you call *me* fool?

Imogen is not dismayed at the insult she is conceived

to have uttered against the heir apparent to her throne. She will not budge an inch: —

> As *I* am *mad*, I do.
> If you'll be patient, I'll no *more* be mad;
> That cures us both.

Then comes a beautiful reaction. Having discharged herself of the long-sustained burden, and made her meaning respecting this wife-wooer plain to Cloten, Imogen experiences a most lively concern at having been forced to speak her mind. 'I am much sorry, sir, you put me to forget the manners of a lady by meddling with words that cause unpleasant feelings;' —

> and learn now, for all,
> That I, which know my heart, do here pronounce,
> By the very truth of it, *I care not for* you,
> And am so near the lack of charity —
> To accuse myself — *I hate* you; which I had rather
> You felt than make 't my boast.

Did ever a badgered and pestered and persecuted woman show such consideration before to a Cloten boor? She wants everything understood, and is anxious even to make her tormentor know that, were her antipathy less acute, she would tell him so.

This is an important point in the play. Cloten is the heavy villain of the piece, and for dramatic and other reasons is to be cut off by a violent death. That this may by tolerated by the audience, and without protest, he must have in some way forfeited its patience and charity in an extreme degree. This he is to do because of the beastly revenge that he shall plot

Cloten, the heavy villain, to be cut off by a violent death.

against Imogen. That he may determine upon a revenge of this sort, he must have a grievance. That grievance will be furnished now. Imogen's unsparing literalness and 'verbalness' of speech has exasperated Cloten. He feels himself virtually the ruler of the kingdom, and his conceit, as we have seen, is boundless. He must needs now, in retort, attack Posthumus. He even ventures to insinuate to Imogen that the marriage which she pretends to with her husband is no more binding than the union of serfs, — a knot that ties itself, without priestly warrant or blessing. The answer he gets is scathing and pitiless. The author has not made his heroine to have been importuned for weeks and weeks by a despicable stepmother, and to be harassed here, with nerves weakened by loss of sleep, and especially by present vexation over her missing bracelet, for nothing. Yet, to speak more justly, he has made such an Imogen from the start as could not be forced, *except* under the most irritating conditions, to utter anything capable of embittering a Cloten. When we have added that Shakespeare has also created Cloten such as he is on purpose to evoke the answer (ll. 129–141) he now gets, the whole is said: —

The heroine planned for this trial.

> Profane fellow!
> Wert thou the *son of Jupiter* and *no more*
> But what *thou art besides*, thou wert *too base*
> *To be his groom*. Thou wert *dignified enough*,
> Even to the *point of envy*, if 't were made
> Comparative for your virtues, to be styl'd
> The under-hangman of his kingdom, and *hated*
> For being *preferr'd so well*.

*Cloten.* The south-fog rot him!
*Imogen.* He never can meet with *more mischance* than come
To be but *nam'd of thee. His meanest garment*
That *ever hath but clipped his body*, is *dearer*
In *my respect* than *all the hairs above thee,*
*Were they all made such men.*

Here Imogen, aroused as we shall never see her aroused again in the play, considers the interview with her wooer ended. Pisanio enters, and is addressed, wholly as if Cloten were not present, with reference (ll. 144–153) to being 'sprited by a fool,' and to the bracelet: —

it was thy master's; 'shrew me
If I would lose it for a revenue
Of any king's in Europe. I do think
I saw 't this morning; confident I am
Last night 't was on my arm: I kiss'd it.
I hope it be not gone to tell my lord
That I kiss aught but he.

Cloten hangs about, not realising yet how deeply the shafts have pierced: —

You have abus'd me.
His meanest garment!
*Imogen.* Ay, I said so, sir.
If you will make 't an action, call witness to 't.

Cloten's imbecile and spoiled-boy whine is unmistakable, 'I will inform your father.' Imogen is so consummately illumined concerning his unmanliness, and so immeasurably disgusted touching everything of him and his, that she cannot but retort, —

Your mother, too.

Of course the situation has dramatic potency in the circumstances that Cloten will not go, but forces Imo-

gen to leave him yet standing where he has received his hurt.

But Imogen! Where was woman more sorely tried, and when more grand in dignity and strength? Her blood is wholly under mastery, her ladylike repose has been scarcely ruffled. And she will apparently not be conscious, when all is over, of having suffered any strain.

SCENE IV

Of course Iachimo is speeding back, as fast as sails can carry him, to Italy and Posthumus; and thither with painful forebodings we follow him. The scene opens again at Philario's house, where we find the host expressing to Posthumus somewhat of his concern lest Iachimo win the wager. Posthumus asserts again, in his unsophisticated innocence of Italian treachery, his confidence in Imogen's womanly and wifely integrity:—

> Fear it not, sir, I would I were so sure
> To win the King as I am bold her honour
> Will remain hers.

'By the way,' ventures Philario, 'what measures are you taking to conciliate the King?' Posthumus admits that he is merely waiting. Does he not know what the Queen is doing? Cannot he divine what Imogen is enduring for his sake? No, certainly; *and Imogen has not told him.* No whit will she embitter his exile with her new troubles. She is living loyally a grand, true life, and she does not grudge the sorrow

Imogen has told Posthumus nothing.

it has enforced. She would not live less large and true at whatever cost of pain.

Iachimo appears. The presence of this man, fresh from the divine Imogen, makes the young husband's heart dance with pride. We easily pardon Posthumus (ll. 30, 31) his note of challenge: —

> I hope the briefness of your answer made
> The speediness of your return.

Iachimo gives Posthumus the letters written by Imogen that night the trunk was by her side. Breaking the seals, Posthumus runs through them provisionally. There is the reference to Iachimo's visit; there are the usual pages of affection and devotion. Posthumus puts the missives aside for more intimate perusal.

> All is well yet. —
> Sparkless this stone as it was wont? Or is 't not
> Too dull for your good wearing?

Posthumus has a right, an infinite, blessed right to say this, as we know; and his fate will be none the worse for the gird at what he feels sure is his adversary's defeat. Iachimo has too stern business in hand to care for Posthumus's enthusiasm. He must administer his evidence in such a way as to keep Posthumus from divining its falseness. He will give it at first grudgingly, as if he were violating confidence. After he has made his victim believe there is nothing really to tell, he will overwhelm him with the bracelet and the secret mark, and make him lose his head. All the while he will insolently, as his

Iachimo's strategy.

bride's charmer and repudiator, patronise the husband. All this, which would perhaps have failed with an Italian lover, easily fools Posthumus. Iachimo awkwardly (ll. 100–104) overreaches himself, yet his victim does not see: —

> Sir — I thank her — that.
> She stripp'd it from her arm. I see her yet:
> Her pretty action did outsell her gift,
> And yet enrich'd it too. *She gave it me*, and *said*
> *She priz'd* it *once*.

Imogen would have cherished always the bracelet.

To one who has discerned the lowest significance of Imogen's nature, this is most preposterous. The story proves too much, infinitely too much. But poor Posthumus, already stung through and through by the Nessus poison, has no aid from common sense. He admits to intellectual belief that his Imogen has, from infatuation, given away his bracelet to a stranger. Were she to have fallen to the lowest levels of her sex, she would have clung at least to that. Besides, she could never have been hypnotised into saying or implying that she *had* prized it *once*, — as if she found herself in wonderment that she could have ever in the least cared for such a man as Posthumus.

### SCENE V

Is not the preceding scene enough? Why should there be another?

Let us not be scandalised at the indelicacy of what is here set down. Shakespeare was at such pains to say his meanings in a refined and knightly way that

he could never have dreamed of seeming offensive to anybody. The bishops and indeed great ladies of his day did not express themselves upon like matters in more guarded language. The plot requires that Posthumus proceed against the life of Imogen; and that he may proceed we must know the motives, and the secret thoughts and knowledge that make up the motives, of his resolution. In the last scene he is shown as despising, repudiating, loathing his bride. Maddened by the insolent gibes of Iachimo, and from personal humiliation, he is prompted for the moment to some sort of vengeance for the injury to his affections. But Posthumus is not, as the world goes, or went, in those days, selfish; otherwise he would have basely and brutally executed his first impulse (iv. 147–149) for revenge. He feels now but the need of punishment for her. He has read her letters, full of her affection, and of prayers for his safe return; he remembers her beautiful face, with its expression of serene and patient fidelity, and he is horrified by it all. *If she had not written!* If she had been content not to assume such delicacy and modesty and devotion, he would not have cared so much. But one so exquisitely false, who can counterfeit goodness so consummately, is surely unfit to live. To punish her because she has wronged society, because she is its one chief outlaw, because she may wreck other lives — this, if he could have analysed his feelings, would have been the motive of the course proposed. Othello, a much greater sufferer because

The change in taste since Shakespeare's times.

The mischief of the letters.

a stronger mind, in a like moment had said (V. ii. 6) of Desdemona, —

Yet she must die, else she'll betray more men.

## Act III

### SCENE I

The clock of the plot moves backward; we are again at the day of the serenade. The Queen, Cloten, and Cymbeline have prepared for audience, and, with the court, are entered in state to receive Lucius and his train. The King is suffered by his wife and her son, who control his policy, to say the opening words; but even these, in their curtness and in their lack of greeting and formality, seem filled with the animus of petticoat rule: —

The King's policy toward Rome shaped by the Queen.

Now say, what would Augustus Cæsar with us?

The answer of Lucius is stately and Romanesque. As a succinct statement of the reasons of his being where he is, and of the illogical predicament in which Britain finds itself, it is a model. It would seem that even the Queen and Cloten could have scarcely failed to catch the lofty tone of this utterance, and would have left the task of making a rejoinder to wiser minds. But the Queen cannot suppress (ll. 10, 11) her vixenish temper even in moments of state: —

And, to kill the marvel,
Shall be so ever.

The imperial ambassador is bound of course to ignore such an utterance as this, and is not again

heard from for fifty lines. Cloten breaks the silence, and speaks the best paragraph that we have yet had from him in the play. There is silence again; and the Queen begins perhaps to realise the situation. In a changed spirit she essays argument, though she does not think well to address much of it to the ambassador. Cloten follows with a characteristic deliverance, in bald prose, which calls forth a sort of domestic protest from the King. To this, however, Cloten pays not the slightest attention. After he has said his utmost say, and published, by dialect and manner, his intellectual vulgarity, Cymbeline ventures (ll. 47–54) a milder explanation of the present policy: —

> You must know,
> Till the injurious Romans did extort
> This tribute from us, we were free. Cæsar's ambition,
> Which swell'd so much that it did almost stretch
> The sides o' the world, against all colour here
> Did put the yoke upon 's; which to shake off
> Becomes a warlike people, whom we reckon
> Ourselves to be.

This reminds us of the Queen's talk, and Cloten assents to it as if it were a deliverance of his dam. Cymbeline next, after apparently a little waiting, formulates his reply. It is kingly and noble, though scarcely strong. Now that the real sovereign of Britain has spoken, while parvenu voices are effectually stilled, Rome voices her dread decree. So the scene is lifted to the true plane of princely intercourse. There is but one further jarring note, while Cloten, with the

The dialogue grows princely.

informality of a hostler of the King's stables, attempts to enlarge the hospitality of the court.

This scene introduces new action. Italy and Britain are to be drawn together in a war; and this will in some way bring home Posthumus. It is a mad step, which Shakespeare, in fixing the character of the King's household, was obliged to prepare for early. Neither the Queen nor Cloten has the slightest conception of the power that they are defying.

### SCENE II

The feelings of horror, and indignation, and wounded affection, which we saw at riot in poor Posthumus, as the last act closed, have expressed themselves in action. Letters have come from Italy to Pisanio. The one from his master to himself, this servant has stopped, in his eagerness, to break seal and read before delivering its companion missive to his mistress. The scene opens with Pisanio's consequent ejaculations of amazement. The notion of Imogen, who undergoes daily torture for constancy, unfaithful; the thought of the chivalrous gentleman whom all the court have loved to call Leonatus, the lion-natured, pretending to have evidence against his bride; the command to put Imogen, a princess, to death, without public understanding, really by murder, — these things upset Pisanio's staid and well-ordered disposition. He is angry (ll. 15–17) that his master assumes him capable of such a commission: —

How *look* I,
That I should seem to lack humanity
So much as this fact comes to?

Posthumus is no paragon of manliness; of that we have had evidence before. We are not surprised that he proposes to pursue his revenge by indirections: —

Do 't: the letter
That I have sent her, *by her own command*
Shall give thee opportunity.

We are glad not to hear the further contents of this letter. The one to Imogen, which lies beside it, all-loving no doubt, is then couched in terms that will mislead her, and put her in his servant's power. No wonder he is tempted to withhold, perhaps indeed destroy, the 'fedary for this act that looks so innocent without.'

Imogen is not long in coming to the summons; and, shame of shames, she is in high spirits this morning. When Pisanio demurely hands over to her the letter, she archly takes him to task for claiming Posthumus to himself: —

Who? *Thy* lord? That is *my* lord, *Leonatus!*

Glancing at the superscription, to make sure, before she opens, that it is her husband's hand, she delays that she may exhaust the joys of anticipation. This is the red-letter day of many weeks of watching. She stops even to voice to the gods her wish as to the message. Then, as she breaks the seals, her aroused mind comments realisingly upon the wax, how otherwise it could be used; for always must she

pursue a text like this to its remainders. Then she runs quick through the contents to see that all is well. Assured that there is no ill news, she reads it (ll. 40–49) aloud to Pisanio in detail: —

> Justice, and your father's wrath, should he take me in his dominion, could not be *so* cruel to me, *as* you, O the dearest of creatures, would even renew me with your eyes. Take notice that I am *in Cambria*, at *Milford Haven*. What your *own love* will out of this advise you, *follow*.

Posthumus assumes his wife's affection.

So Posthumus assumes his wife's affection for himself, just as of old, in this plan to destroy her life. He has taken pains to be enigmatic, apparently for conscience' sake, yet he affirms his love. Of course there can be but one effect of such a letter: —

> O, for a horse with wings!

Pisanio shows no enthusiasm at the news, and is undoubtedly much dismayed lest he betray the real state of his feelings about the letter. Imogen thinks him merely slow: —

> *Hear'st* thou, Pisanio?
> *He* is at *Milford Haven!*

Her excitement is naïve and beautiful, yet not one jot beyond control. She would fain pet her serving-man, that he may speak his counsels thickly, and thus estop, for her, the sense of lapsing time. How far it is to Milford, and how Wales ever became so happy as to inherit the haven where her husband has landed, and how they may steal away, how

explain their return and absence, — all these items press upon her mind. She knows how fast men ordinarily ride, but it seems to her that there should be means of covering even several scores of miles 'twixt hour and hour.

Pisanio, under other circumstances, would aid her; he cannot assist the horrible delusion. So, after the few minutes of ebullition, she discards in advance all his advice, with (ll. 75–79) her mind made up: —

> But this is foolery.
> Go bid my woman feign a sickness, say
> She'll home to her father; and provide me presently
> A riding suit, no costlier than would fit
> A franklin's housewife.

Pisanio is not much inclined to stir, and even hints that he is not at all of her mind. Then he gets his orders: —

> *Away*, I prithee.
> *Do* as *I bid thee.* There is no more to say.

So this domestic noblewoman, who would not have thought of running away when the play opens, is unconsciously ready for such a step. Now that Posthumus, after these months of absence, has come to see her, and calls for her, she will go to him. Thus, too, has the author invented means, and skilfully enough, of bringing Imogen away from her father's court.

SCENE III

The scene shifts to Wales, whither the author makes us precede Imogen and Pisanio. It is an unbroken wilderness, and the trees on the rocky slopes shine in the morning dew. From the mouth of a cave over against us three figures, new to the play, emerge. They are evidently mountaineers, though they do not wear mean clothing. The first to appear is a man past middle life, with long white beard. The two young men who, stooping under the low entrance, follow him are twenty years old and upwards. We note at once the singular refinement and strength in the speech of these cave-dwellers. They should be men of action, but they seem scholars, philosophers. The fatherly figure, Belarius, is unwilling surely to let slip an opportunity of drawing moral lessons: —

The courtier mountaineers.

> Consider,
> When you above perceive me like a crow,
> That it is place which lessens and sets off.

Belarius has evidently seen the world, while his two wards have not. This soon comes out unequivocally in the dialogue. Belarius has lived somewhere at court, undoubtedly then at Cymbeline's; the lads have never winged from view of their cavern nest. Guiderius repines at the inaction of the life they lead, but implies that there is something that keeps them from attempting the larger walks without. Arviragus too speaks as if he and his companion expected to grow old like their keeper in this cave.

It becomes evident that the author is making these characters talk thus for our benefit. It is scarcely probable that Belarius would tell his wards his story on this particular morning of all the year. But Shakespeare is not taking pains in this play except when he is dealing with its heroine. He makes Belarius tell us enough of his past to establish connection with the preceding part of the drama, and then sends the boys away that he may impart needful information concerning them. They prove to be the sons of Cymbeline, Guiderius being elder and heir to the crown. This revelation was prepared for in the opening dialogue (I. i. 57–61) of the play. Even the name of the nurse, Euriphile, who stole the princes, is worked in. It seems that Cymbeline, who had lived at Rome, and whom Augustus admitted to knighthood, affected southern tastes, and gave his sons Latin names. Belarius, intolerant of such degeneracy, has exchanged these, as also his own name, for supposed Celtic ones. Shakespeare apparently was not aware that 'Polydore' was derived from Greek. He certainly knew some Latin, yet not enough to remember that the name of his hero must be accented on the first and not the second syllable.

Shakespeare takes pains only with his heroine.

Cymbeline's Latin tastes.

SCENE IV

Imogen and Pisanio have ridden across Britain, two hundred miles more or less, and they are now almost in sight of Milford harbour. We know from Imogen's first words that Pisanio has revealed nothing. We

can guess that she has been so overjoyed at the prospect of seeing her husband, and so delectably imperious in hurrying her companion forward, that he has not had the heart to tell her that it is all a hoax. So far Posthumus's plot has succeeded well, at least for the play; Imogen has been drawn away from the court by her husband's lure. There are reasons, we may suspect, why the author needs to have Imogen out of the capital, and perhaps in the wilderness, at this time.

Pisanio, when Imogen turns toward him, shows deep trouble on his face. At once she infers that harm has come to Posthumus, that he is not here: —

> Pisanio! man!
> *Where* is *Posthumus?*

Pisanio does not expect such summary calling to account. He is speechless, and looks fixedly before him. Imogen's anxiety increases; she asks him why he stares. He is accustomed to obedience, but he cannot bring himself to answer anything. He sighs, and Imogen begs him to put himself into a haviour of less fear, or she shall lose her mind. There is silence yet, and she importunes him once more to declare what makes his agitation. He can do nothing but give her the letter, the second of the two (III. ii. 17–19) letters, — if there were two, in which his master has ordained the killing.

Imogen's dismay.

Imogen, seeing the address in her husband's hand, and feeling herself unequal to sustaining the calamity that she is sure has befallen him, if she reads of it

herself, prays Pisanio to break it to her gently. Pisanio implies that it is not she but himself whom the letter concerns mainly, and at this she reads it aloud. Thus the author, who wishes us to hear it in detail, saves Pisanio from making known the indictment, which it contains, to his mistress's ears.

Well, what has happened? There is no swoon or outcry; there is but silence, and the pathetic collapse of an endeavour to respond to her husband's call. There is but little, even, of indignation. Instead of Posthumus dead, or in extremity, from the King's officers, in Wales, it is herself who is wounded, pursued, forlorn. In perfect self-possession she realises to herself the contradiction of her constancy, and this casting-off. She can reach no least suspicion of the reasons; she remembers Iachimo, but her woman's intuition finds in him no clew.

Imogen cannot divine the truth.

She theorises, of course, but wildly, — as if Posthumus, fallen from his integrity, should wish to destroy her for being true. And just as he, believing her false, has repudiated all her sex, so she, for the moment, persuades herself that all good-seeming in men is counterfeit, put on to inveigle ladies.

But Imogen, for all her scorn, does not rail against Posthumus for his low birth; she does not remember it indeed against him. Her devotion, even at this moment, is sublime. Just as Desdemona accepted death from her husband's hands, without calling for rescue, so she here, drawing Pisanio's sword, pleads for the stroke. There is nothing to live for now. Pisanio

Imogen does not think of Posthumus's low birth.

flings his rapier deep into the forest, to show her how he regards her husband's order. But she assumes still that it will be obeyed, and prepares her bosom for Pisanio's dagger. She finds something, forgotten for the moment, before her heart, — the letter of Posthumus which has allured her away from all protection to this doom. She throws away this letter, which later Pisanio takes up. She is calm now: —

> And thou, Posthumus, thou that didst set up
> My disobedience 'gainst the King my father,
> And make me put into contempt the suits
> Of princely fellows, shalt hereafter find
> It is no act of common passage, but
> A strain of rareness.

She feels no jealousy, but grieves to think how Posthumus will one day regret and suffer.

But this scene is not a study of Imogen; all that has thus far happened is of course. The author's purpose is mainly to advance the plot. In a few minutes of further dialogue, Imogen bethinks herself that there can be no return, now, to the court. Pisanio is made, moreover, to have divined that his mistress could be induced after the revelation just made to go in disguise to Italy and find out the truth. The rest of the scene is devoted to the evolution of this turn. First, Pisanio proposes to report her as murdered to her husband. He then brings her to the thought of exile, and after 'of treading a course pretty and full of view': —

Imogen willing to go to Italy.

> yea, haply, near
> The residence of Posthumus, — so nigh at least
> That though his actions were not visible, yet
> Report should render him hourly to your ear
> As truly as he moves.

Perhaps Pisanio was really acute enough to govern Imogen's motives thus; but we suspect Shakespeare is hastening to his conclusion, and, by poetic liberty, enlarging Pisanio to fit the need. With the new-aroused desire in his mistress to see Posthumus, he will overweigh her scruples against the page's clothes. These — sword, doublet, hat, hose, all that answer to them — he has in fulness of faith provided and brought into the wilderness with him. He needs beyond but to steady the plan with the suggestion of service in Lucius's train, and to commit to his mistress's hands the panacea that he had some months back from the Queen. He will not wait to escort his charge all the way to Milford town; he will but show her a view of it from the nearest hill. Time urges; and he would but run the risk of identification, by the King's officers, should he venture nearer.

Shakespeare crowds the scene.

### SCENE V

The ambassador Lucius has been pleasantly entertained, and delays departure. Pisanio has returned, and finds him not yet set out. This will bring disappointment, and, we fear, hardship, to the princess who has been left in Wales. At last Lucius is ready, and

Lucius will not reach Milford Haven tomorrow.

takes leave of Cymbeline. The Queen shrewishly twits the King of slowness, —

'tis not *sleepy* business, —

but he responds with an answer of high-bred mildness. Then the father recalls that Imogen 'has not appeared before the Roman, nor tendered a daughter's duty.' He will have her called sternly to account. But the Queen interposes, —

Beseech your majesty,
Forbear sharp speeches to her.

The Queen knows that the King really loves Imogen, and that harshness, such as proposed, may end in a reconciliation. The report now comes that the princess's doors are locked, and that she has not been seen of late. The King hurries out to find his daughter; and the Queen, to be sure of what shall happen between them, sends Cloten after. She is convinced that Imogen is either dead of 'despair' or fled. She does not, we notice, think evil of her prisoner for running away, or rail at her for being a hypocrite or violating the implied parole.

The author begins next the important business of getting Cloten to follow Imogen to Milford Haven.

Cloten must follow Imogen.

Cloten is made to mention the revenge again to us, lest we forget, for the moment, about his grievance. Pisanio, just at this juncture, happens in. Cloten considers him (*cf.* l. 54 above) an old man, and presumably out of practice with the rapier, so pursues him threateningly with his own weapon drawn. The result is that Pisanio finds no

better expedient than to give over the letter of Posthumus, which has called Imogen away, and which, spurned by her, he has just brought back from the wilderness. This pleases Cloten, and makes him think that Pisanio is ready, at last, to change masters. Rather strangely, Pisanio consents to enter Cloten's service. He probably understands that, with Imogen gone from court, and reunited to her husband, it will be well to have a patron, and one belonging to the King's party. The real necessity, however, for this transfer of allegiance, as we soon see, lies in the plot. For some reason, later to be known, the piece requires that Cloten should come into possession of certain garments belonging to Posthumus. To secure these for Cloten, according to the verities of the case, the author must use Pisanio's aid. And, after all, Pisano's spirit is not much different from what might be expected in one accustomed to service in kings' houses.

Why Pisanio made to change masters.

Cloten, as we have divined, is to be sacrificed; so the author beats about for means that will enforce our consent to that part of his purpose. He is not very considerate certainly of this character; he might have made it less revolting. We now see why Cloten was made to draw upon Posthumus in the first scene. It makes Cloten's present presumption, that he can easily disarm and kill Posthumus at Milford Haven, where he expects to force him to a new encounter, credible. Pisanio now enters, with the clothing of his late master,

The use of the assault in the first scene.

which the author evidently intends to have us see, with reference probably to some later identification. Pisanio shows, by his deft evasion, —

She can scarce be there *yet*, —

how well he has learned, in his long years of service, to prevaricate squarely, yet avoid to conscience all the effect of lying. The scene ends with a word from Pisanio, to save us worry about our heroine's safety, and to show that he is still at heart all loyal to her and her husband.

### SCENE VI

Imogen has found herself unable to reach the arm of the sea that Pisanio pointed out to her from the hill. She has wandered around and around, over her own tracks, thoroughly bewildered. She was worn out with court vexations and ennui before starting on the hurried jaunt that brought her here. The anguish since undergone, the hardship of two nights spent without protection in the wilderness, what with hunger and despair, have well-nigh exhausted her strength and courage. She yet rallies, and tramps onward, when Posthumus comes to her mind. He has had such an influence upon her life that she believes instinctively in him still. Her reason has been persuaded against him; her heart yet finds him true.

Imogen confides yet in Posthumus.

So she stumbles upon the path leading to the cave that, a few hours back, we saw Belarius and her brothers leave. It seems clearly enough the hold

of savage folk. But she must have help, soon, even from savage folk, if she is to live. We know her business-like, matter-of-fact way of dealing with an emergency, —

> I were *best* not call; I *dare* not call;

yet she sends her piping, treble voice, as stalwartly as she can, in challenge to the cave-keepers. For she is now, we must remember, clad in doublet and hose, the page ostensibly of some nobleman. So she calls as to mine host before an hostelry: —

> Ho! *who's here?*

Then lowering her tones, she adds to herself: —

> If anything that's civil, speak; if savage,
> Take or lend.

After challenging again, without response, she prepares at once to enter. There is plenty of flutter in the pulses, but that does not hinder. Remembering that she wears a sword, and that a man would draw it resolutely at such a moment, she pulls it falteringly, and with a smile at the absurdity of proposing to run down the occupants, out of the scabbard. Then she disappears within the cave.

The author means to make clear to us that Guiderius is the more active and martial of the brothers: —

> You, Polydore, have prov'd best woodman, and
> Are master of the feast. Cadwal and I
> Will play the cook and servant; 'tis our match.

The talk of the hunters, as they approach the cave with their game, startles the quiet of the place; but their guest within seems not to hear. Belarius, pre-

paring to enter, a little afterward, sees the little fairy-like page, clad in court garments, and eating some portion as in famishment from the feast of yesterday. Belarius has seen no such grace and elegance for a score of years. Such beauty of face he has never seen at all, for no daughter had yet been born to Cymbeline when he fled into the wilderness with these boys. Imogen, hearing the voices, comes out from the cave. She has never in her life been a trespasser, or done a wrong to anybody; and beautiful is her dismay when she finds, instead of savages, great-browed and noble-featured folk to reckon with. Forgetting her boldness and her sword, she throws herself upon the mercy of these men with a simplicity and delicacy never bred in her by the King's tutors. She is wholly fascinating to the boys, and to ourselves. It is at once evident that Shakespeare has brought her away from the court to her brothers, that she may exhibit a more fundamental and complete queenliness than she could have achieved at home. What could be more etherealised, angelic, than this plea?

Imogen, tried, to bring out her fine nature.

> *Good* masters, *harm* me not!
> Before I *enter'd* here, I *call'd*, and thought
> To have *begg'd* or *bought* what I have took. Good *troth*,
> I have *stol'n* nought, nor *would* not, though I had found
> *Gold* strew'd i' the floor. Here's *money* for my meat.
> I would have *left* it on the board so *soon*
> As I had made my *meal*, and parted
> With *prayers* for the provider.

The contempt of these royal lads for the gold that Imogen has taken from her purse, she mistakes for

anger. But there is no selfish insistence or self-assertion against it. Meaner minds sometimes affirm that the world owes them a living. This woman, who has forgotten that she is heir to the whole of Britain, would have starved rather than touch the food of these men, knowing that they would withhold consent. Here, Shakespeare would have us recognise, is a kingly scene, though not enacted within arras-covered walls.

The boys are quite too absolute for this emergency; it is Belarius who turns the subject. There is nothing suspicious in her answer that she is bound for Milford Haven. Noblemen and noblemen's servants were passing to and from this seaport town continually. Then it is brought out that Imogen believes that, by her two days' delay, she has lost her chance of going to her husband. The 'kinsman' of course is Lucius, whom for discretion she feels it best not to name:—

> I have a kinsman who
> Is bound for Italy. He embark'd at Milford;
> To whom being going, almost spent with hunger,
> I am fall'n in this offence.

The open hint of hunger, which she has not made clear before, awakes Belarius to a better show of hospitality. The boys, who have for some time been silent, break out into protestations of enthusiasm. Guiderius is like his sister, and would do offices for the beautiful guest, — would woo hard but to be a groom. Arviragus, on the contrary, has imagination, such as Imogen is unprovided with:—

Arviragus has imagination; but Guiderius is like his sister.

> I'll make 't *my* comfort
> He *is* a *man*. I'll *love* him as *my brother;*
> And *such* a welcome as I'ld give to him,
> After *long absence*, such is *yours*. *Most welcome!*
> Be sprightly, for you fall 'mongst friends.

What a surprising change to the perplexed princess! These men are more refined and chivalrous than courtiers. Has Imogen ever seen such genuineness and simplicity before? At any rate, it is all utterly fascinating to her. She wrings her hands, as she realises how easily Posthumus might have been hers, if her rank had but been the same as theirs. That we may know more fully her indifference to privilege, and her power of appreciating worth in whatever humble guises, the author makes Belarius whisper to the boys, and thus enable Imogen to talk in an aside. She avers that the greatest men she has ever known, if reduced to courts no bigger than the cave, and forced to furnish service to themselves, could not outpeer these twain.

> Pardon me, gods!
> I'd change my sex to be companion to them,
> Since Leonatus 's false.

She cannot but recur, at times, to Posthumus's revolt; but she does not remember her resolve to hold all men false henceforth. And she would gladly live in companionship with men so true. But the scene, which the author has not hurried, is now wound up. Belarius begs that his page-guest come within. Imogen, who must always begin where she has left off, hesitates,

Shakespeare refuses sight of the cavern home.

thinking of her trespass. But Guiderius pleads, and Arviragus supports him in an Apollo strain, —

> The night to the owl and morn to the lark less welcome.

Imogen yields presently, and, ushered by the younger brother, enters. But Shakespeare keeps the interior of the cavern from our view.

### SCENE VII

The object of this scene is mainly to show how Iachimo will be brought into the British wars. Posthumus possibly may be drawn along, although he has little interest now in the fate of Cymbeline. To save the time of the play, the author makes Augustus issue to Lucius his commission, and ordain the reënforcements from Italy, before Cymbeline's answer arrives from Britain. This is of course a license, but scarcely mars, when noted, the effect of the play. We should of course bear in mind that Shakespeare does not do such things in *Lear* or *Othello*, or like plays written with superior care.

Iachimo to be brought by the war to Britain.

## Act IV

### SCENE I

Cloten is shown here to have reached Wales, and to be in search of Imogen and Posthumus. We need this evidence before seeing him in a succeeding situation. He is made to give evidence of the old brutishness, and the old conceit, with the added presumption of immunity, through his mother, for his crimes.

SCENE II

It is again early morning. Belarius and his wards must go out, as is their habit, to the chase. Imogen, now that relief and reaction have succeeded to the excitement of the last days, and to the strain of the weeks and months preceding, finds herself scarcely able to rise with the others. She shows her exhaustion in every feature. Belarius seems quickest to read this open secret; Arviragus is most ready and complete in sympathy.

Brother, *stay* here.
Are *we* not brothers?

Imogen, reminded in some way of court exclusiveness, is inclined to be ironical. 'So man *should* be; but we must remember that some human clay is of inferior dignity, though its dust is as select as any.' Then she admits that she is very sick. That starts Guiderius up: —

Go *you* to hunting. I'll abide with him.

Guiderius is accustomed, evidently, to have his way. Neither Belarius nor Arviragus gainsays. The idea of ado, because of her admission that she is not well, makes Imogen qualify. To her orderly mind, Guiderius remaining at home will spoil for him, and perhaps the others, the whole day. 'The breach of custom is breach of all.' Besides, she considers herself practically not so very sick after all, since she 'can talk about it.' She has not been spoiled, certainly, by petting. She begs to be left alone: —

> Pray you, *trust* me here.
> I'll rob none but myself; and let me die,
> Stealing so poorly.

This is pure femininenes, though Imogen does not dream how ill she conceals her sex. Guiderius has never felt such charms before, and does not know how he is wrought upon, believing as he does that Imogen is a man.

> I love thee. I have spoke it;
> How much the quantity, the weight as much,
> As I do love my father.

Belarius affects to be signally surprised, or shocked, but is really proud that the lad responds to noble influences so nobly. Arviragus, with equal frankness, confesses to even deeper feeling. As he withdraws, bidding his new 'brother' farewell, the sick Imogen does not fail to wish him sport, though he has forgot to wish her health. Belarius and Guiderius have set out for the hills already, though they walk but slowly and look back. The petite, trim figure is seen to totter slowly toward the cave, then disappear within. In the talk of the boys which follows we are made to know more definitely how their sister has enchanted them. With Arviragus it is, naturally, her singing; with Guiderius, her accomplishments and resources as a cook. But it is Arviragus who has approached closer to her confidence and sympathy. To him alone she (ll. 41, 42 above) has hinted she might tell something of her story. It is he who has divined the riddle of her face, its sorrow which she harbours but with protest,

Arviragus has come nearer to his sister.

for she will not mope with friends, and the smile of kindliness by which she almost conquers it. Arviragus is also no mean interpreter of what he sees: —

> Nobly he yokes
> A smiling with a sigh, as if the sigh
> Was that it was, for not being such a smile.

But Guiderius, in his matter-of-fact way, sees and says it very differently: —

> I do note
> That grief and patience, rooted in him both,
> Mingle their spurs together.

Cloten probably travelled all last night, to be surer of his prey. Breakfastless and weary, he has scurried about since dawn, and begins to realise that he has been duped. He stumbles upon the hunters, who are lingering yet over their talk. Belarius sounds the note of alarm, recognising Cloten, through twenty years, as son of the Queen. Guiderius, the youth of deeds, will not retreat, but sends his Apollo brother and their guardian away. To evolve the quarrel that shall rid Imogen of her persecutor, occupies the author but a few lines. He calls our attention again, through Cloten, to Posthumus's clothing, in which the hero was first shown to us. Cloten is half minded to be proud of being attired so well; for his rival's taste, we may be sure, is the best at court. Guiderius has no proper weapon to meet his adversary with, but drives him forth to bay fearlessly just the same. In a few moments he is returned, bearing the head of Cloten by its hair. This is much, of course, to force upon

Guiderius has no sword.

our sight; but the author has need that it all be visual. He has made a Cloten on purpose to endure decapitation, for reasons soon to appear. Of course the punishment is extreme, but the author has prepared for it doubly. We could scarcely have endured the plot, unless some one expiated the general guilt. There must be hurt to answer hurt. So, outside of his own villany and its issue, Cloten is made the scapegoat of the play.

Belarius has hoped for some turn of fortune by which one of the boys should get the throne. The present business threatens to spoil all that. Arviragus (ll. 156–159) chafes that he has been denied his share in the feat: —

> Polydore,
> I love thee brotherly, but envy much
> Thou has robb'd me of this deed.

While Belarius waits for Guiderius's return, he sends Arviragus in advance to Fidele. This separation is clearly for a purpose. As the others after some minutes follow, they hear the rude harp that Belarius once devised, left long since untouched, sounding. The chords are mournful. Belarius is scandalised: —

> My ingenious instrument!
> *Hark*, Polydore, it *sounds!* But what occasion
> Hath Cadwell *now* to give it motion?

Splendidly dramatic is the effect of this slow, mournful music from within the cave, while neither the means nor the occasion of the sounds is seen. Guiderius cannot of course explain, though he tries his wits sorely upon the

The dramatic effect of the music sounded in advance.

case. Then comes something to view, which the old eyes of Belarius catch more quickly than Guiderius's younger sight. It is Arviragus bending low to pass the cavern entrance, and stooping withal in tenderness over the body of his sister, carried in his arms. He brings her out before Belarius and his brother.

> The bird is dead
> That we have made so much on. I had rather
> Have skipp'd from sixteen years of age to sixty,
> To have turn'd my leaping-time into a crutch,
> Than have seen this.

The form of his sister lies close about Arviragus, her head against his shoulder. The sight starts the imagination of Guiderius, which never speaks but by the card: —

> O sweetest, fairest lily!
> My brother *wears* thee not the one half so well
> As when thou grew'st thyself.

Belarius, with an old man's slowness, has been pondering since yesterday the meaning of this visit, and has divined substantially (ll. 206–208) of the truth.

> Thou blessed thing!
> Jove knows what man thou mightst have made; but I,
> Thou diedst, a most rare boy of melancholy.

Arviragus, in a very exalted state of fancy, tells how the body lay, 'smiling as some fly had tickled the sleeper, his right cheek reposing on a cushion,' —

> o' the floor,
> His arms thus leagu'd. I thought he slept, and put
> My clouted brogues from off my feet, whose rudeness
> Answer'd my steps too loud.

The author has caused Imogen to fall asleep with her arms 'leagued' or folded, across her bosom, to conceal her sex from the one who should lift her up. Arviragus is made to have put off his shoes to mark to us the degree of his fine thoughtfulness, not bred, but instinctive in his kingly blood.

As their sorrow deepens, each of the brothers gives expression to what he has discerned in the beautiful youth now lying dead. Guiderius is wholly objective, as heretofore. He can best declare the beauty he has seen as something too spiritual to know corruption. Fairies will flock perforce about his burying-place, which will be a bed and not a grave. Arviragus, on the contrary, is subjective and etherealised wholly in his vision: —

> With fairest flowers
> Whilst summer lasts and I live here, Fidele,
> I'll sweeten thy sad grave. Thou shalt not lack
> The flower that's like thy face, pale primrose, nor
> The azur'd harebell, like thy veins, no, nor
> The leaf of eglantine, whom not to slander,
> Outsweeten'd not thy breath. The ruddock would,
> With charitable bill, — O bill, sore-shaming
> Those rich-left heirs that let their fathers lie
> Without a monument, — bring thee all this,
> Yea, and furr'd moss besides, when flowers are none,
> To winter-ground thy corse.

The proof of imaginative delicacy is seen throughout, but best perhaps in the personification *whom*. It is the interpretation of a virile mind, though a woman's tenderness could not have made it sweeter. Guiderius cries out in protest, for there seem words

and tears too many. Such a tribute is to him empty and unserious, in the face of the deeds, the offices that they delay: —

> Let us *bury* him,
> And *not* protract with admiration what
> Is now *debt due*.

Arviragus accedes; but he finds himself immediately at a loss, as a child might, where the body should be laid. Guiderius is immediate with his answer. Arviragus, for his part, feels equal certitude concerning the obsequies: they must sing him to his resting-place, just as once Euriphile, their mother. But Guiderius cannot sing, he is sure, for tears; and they agree not to attempt more than to *say* the words together. Thus the author rises toward his climax, as always, by the simplest means: two youths, prevented from singing their funereal hymn, lest grief shall make them dumb, do not think to forego the tribute, but they will brokenly *speak* the lines.

Shakespeare's climaxes.

It would seem incongruous, perhaps, for Belarius to be present at the obsequies proposed, having no part; and it would not probably be pleasing to us were he to assist. So Shakespeare contrives to have him gone. Of course this touching funeral might have been delayed until his return with Cloten's body; but that would have spoiled the whole. Arviragus is the master of singing, as Guiderius is of the hunt; yet he will have Guiderius begin. Thus the lads, taking up the body of Imogen, and advancing slowly to the measure of

Belarius absent from the obsequies.

the lines recited, carry it toward its resting-place. There is no mention any more of burying; that would have burdened us with infinite concern at this chief moment. The song has no mention of Fidele (*cf.* l. 238 above) as we expect;[1] hence we might suppose it not the one furnished originally by the author of the play. But it befits the rustic situation, and is wholly such as might have taken shape, in deep solitude, on the lips of boys philosophically inclined, as these are. The sentiments are all generic, and by no means youthful.

The moment of climax should be now, as the weeping youths begin to bear along the body slowly, to the measure of their chant. But we know that their sister is not dead; hence the real consummation of interest is to be postponed. Yet the delay incident to rendering the song, four six-line stanzas, affords time for the fullest arousement of imagination. We discern Imogen at her highest of womanly nobleness and power. Guiderius, who is Mars enough to have slain her enemy without a sword, is all in sobs because of his few hours' knowledge of her mind. Arviragus, the prince-genius, feels more than a brother's love toward her, called forth by her unpretending sweetness and ministry. She has been faithful unto death, though she is yet not to die. She has moved us, as her death could

The climax of pathos.

[1] The references, besides, are to 'lads and girls,' and 'lovers,' and not to any one of years. On the other hand, 'tyrant's stroke' and 'frown o' the great' suit the notion of a former use over the dead body of Euriphile.

alone have moved us, by the beautiful singleness and completeness of her life. There have been no moods, no humours; there has been no variableness or shadow of turning from an almost masculine justice and integrity, yet in all womanliness and feminine devotion.

As the hymn ended, Belarius appears bearing Cloten's body. Here is something unlooked for: the headless corpse of Cloten and Imogen are laid side by side. Flowers are strewed on both; the old man and the brothers retire softly, reverently, upon their knees. What is to be the issue? It is to be the instant of climax. The drug has done its work; Imogen rouses excitedly from her trance, all in struggle to reach Milford Haven. Lying upon her face she is kept from seeing the body that rests beside. She sits erect, and tries to rise. But strength fails her; her brain is yet too full of sleep. Before she again lies down she discerns the form that has been laid next hers. The flowers have hidden it hitherto, and she does not yet see that it is headless. This is a moment to have driven a mind less strong, insane. Slowly, but insistently, she works her way back to certitude.

The climax of the scene.

> I *hope* I dream,
> For *so* I thought I was a cave-keeper,
> And cook to honest creatures. But 'tis *not so.*
> . . . . . Good faith
> I tremble still with fear; but *if* there *be*
> Yet left in heaven *as small* a drop of *pity*
> *As a wren's eye*, fear'd gods, a *part* of it!

She plucks away the flowers. It is a headless man;

and the garments are her husband's! The objectiveness of her fancy makes her sure that the shape also is his. And then, horrified almost to speechlessness, she sees in her mind's eye the conclusion of the whole matter. Pisanio and Cloten have conspired to cut him off, and she has been lured here to find him dead. Her imagination that cannot mount, but creeps, makes all this real to her. The dreadful spectacle of the bloody neck, as she turns her eyes once more to sight it surely, makes her flesh creep and her senses reel. She swoons, half embracingly, half shunningly, across the body. Cloten's baseness is transfigured for the moment through this mistake.

Imogen's objectiveness again misleads.

The tramp of horses is plainly heard. This is not the British thoroughfare to Milford Haven, but a patch of glade apparently not far from it. The Roman lieutenant, only now landed from Gaul with Lucius's commission, finding his superior officer not yet returned from Cymbeline, seems to have set out, with this group of brother subalterns and the soothsayer, on the way to escort him in. The two parties have met but a little distance back, for the captain has not finished, to Lucius, his summary of the intelligence that waits him at the harbour. They are riding just now in the glade, beside the beaten path, and happen thus upon Cloten's body. Imogen has come nearly to the end of her swoon; and the captain, who has dismounted to know whether the page be still alive, arouses her to her senses. She seem-

Imogen, with Cloten, left near the highroad to Milford Haven.

ingly does not recognise Lucius as the delayed embassador, whom she had hoped to accompany to Rome. Her self-possession comes back, and she works her plight into a consistent story, keeping back all reference to Cloten and Pisanio. In half a page of dialogue the imperial proconsul has offered service — Roman magnates were wont to set much store by beautiful boys — and she has not hesitated to accept.

So Imogen's flight from court was to end in this. She has been brought here that we may receive the utmost of her influence. There can be no doubt of that. But what is to become of her? Her husband is in Italy, and she, as we have probably divined, is to be restored to him. She believes that she has, beside her, his dead body. How can she think of leaving Britain, with Posthumus dead there and buried in its soil? Here seems at first a paradox, a contradiction. There is still the same infinite devotion, the old unfathomable instinct of service: —

> But first, an't please the gods,
> I'll hide my master from the flies, as deep
> As these poor pickaxes can dig; and when
> With wild wood-leaves and weeds I ha' strew'd his grave,
> And on it said a century of prayers,
> Such as I can, twice o'er, I'll weep and sigh,
> And leaving so his service, follow you,
> So please you entertain me.

Yet it is indubitable that she is perfectly willing to go away.

The artistic problem here is profound and intricate, and seems to have engaged the author early after the

opening of the play. Imogen, to be sure, does not leave Britain, but Shakespeare makes her resolve and expect to do so. There are indeed strong reasons, perhaps recognised by herself, why she should wish to go. If Posthumus has been true, and Cloten have bribed Pisanio to kill him, her safety evidently lies elsewhere. To escape the Queen and Cloten, she will accept the pro-consul's offer. Yet we are sure, knowing her nature as we have learned it, that she would have refused to budge foot from Britain, but would have stayed to keep and guard her husband's grave. Very evidently Shakespeare thought so too. He has had much ado to bring about, artistically and truthfully, the outcome that the plot demands.

Imogen's fears of the Queen and Cloten.

The effect upon affection of seeing the dead body of a beloved one crushed or disfigured has been often noticed. Even when there is vastly less mutilation than Imogen believes that her husband in this case has suffered, the instinct of tender offices and devotion to the memory of the deceased is well-nigh paralysed. Imogen, who never allowed Posthumus's bracelet to leave her arm, has no thought of strewing her husband's grave with flowers, save now at burial. She would have been aghast, undoubtedly, could her attention have been drawn specifically to this lack of feeling. Arviragus proposed, thinking his sister dead, to sweeten her sad grave so long as summers should succeed each other and find him living; and we know that he cannot outrival Imogen. So the de-

The influence of disfigurement upon affection.

vice of putting Posthumus's clothes on the victim, to compel Imogen's belief that her husband was dead, and the whole idea of her insult to Cloten touching his meanest garments, and of the proposed revenge, were woven into the plot only to enable her free action now. The point illustrates well how conscientiously a great artist works. An inferior author would have had her go away without a reason.

Imogen's insult to Cloten planned to enable her free action now.

The scene has been a long one, and must not offer further action. We shall not care to see Cloten laid away by the Roman soldiers in Welsh soil, and Imogen in further grief. Lucius will himself take part in the burial. After, we shall expect him, with Imogen in his protection, to attempt a more active rôle.

### SCENE III

Things have changed at the King's palace, whither the scene now shifts. Cymbeline is in some excitement, as the first line shows. His sending the attendant back with *Again!* to the Queen's apartments, tells how incessantly and anxiously he has sought for tidings. He is made to show us, in a parenthetical soliloquy, that his lethargy is effectually lifted, and that he realises his resourceless plight, with the Queen, and Cloten, and Imogen, — the great part of his comfort now, no longer by. Pisanio gives evidence again of his expertness at equivocation, but incurs the debit of at least one fib. The First Lord's bad memory assists; but for the assurance that 'the day she was

The King's lethargy lifted.

missing he was here,' it might have gone hard with the smooth serving-man. The time is, apparently, two or three days after the last scene, for report of the arriving of the legions from Gaul has just come in. The Roman forces under Lucius are evidently waiting to be strengthened by the contingent of Italian gentry (*cf.* ll. 341, 342, of the last scene) before beginning the campaign. The statement, in the First Lord's advices, that (ll. 25, 26) Iachimo's forces are already landed, seems premature.

In default of the usual counsellors, Cymbeline will probably restore the First Lord to his rightful post; and in that case the British army will not wait to be attacked. Pisanio closes the scene with some discussion of his troubles. He finds (ll. 41, 42) that he has lost standing somewhat with himself: —

> The heavens still must work.
> Wherein I am false I am honest; not true, to be true.

We note, at the beginning of his soliloquy, an instance of the author's resort to dramatic illusion. Of course there has been no such interval, since Imogen left the court for Wales, as Pisanio is made here to imply; but that fact is not so easily realised. Shakespeare is very deft and effectual in producing upon the audience or reader the effect of a long lapse of time.

The illusion of long lapse of time.

SCENE IV

On account of Iachimo's delay, the forces of Cymbeline will meet the enemy in Wales. The country

about the cave is full of the comings and goings of British soldiery. Belarius and his wards must soon take sides, or be captured for bandit mountaineers. The present scene details the steps by which all three are brought to join the army of the King. Belarius has small help from patriotism, and at first proposes to move higher up the mountains, until the victory is known. There are signs that the battle is even now beginning. Arviragus declares, in spite of his guardian's wishes, that he will share in the fight. The reasons that he recounts inflame Guiderius. Then Belarius, proud of the spirit in the lads, and sure that the issue will be glorious, bids them lead out: —

Arviragus's imagination carries him away.

> The time seems long; their blood thinks scorn,
> Till it fly out and show them princes born.

## Act V

### SCENE I

In the camp of the Italian gentry, not far from where Cloten lies, is shown Posthumus, taking from his bosom the handkerchief, sent by Pisanio, and stained, as he believes, with the blood of Imogen. Even since that token came, he has suffered torments of remorse. His belief in Iachimo's evidence persists, yet he is not convinced. Deep down in his soul he feels that Imogen is true, or if not true, infinitely more worthy than himself. He is not a man of vision, or, as we say, educated; he is not able to maintain his peace of

Posthumus not a man of vision.

mind in spite of an Iachimo's assaults upon his faith. He blames Pisanio for consenting to be the instrument of his wickedness. This British ground in which, as he assumes Imogen is buried, seems sacred. He will fight against the invaders of it, and most adventurously.

> So I'll die
> For thee, O Imogen, even for whom my life
> Is every breath a death.

That he may change sides without the knowledge of either party, who would recognise him equally, he will disguise himself as a common soldier. He is made to invest himself, in our sight, with some British peasant's dress that he has picked up, that we may identify him hereafter. True to his character, he thinks this no inconsiderable condescension.

> To shame the guise o' the world, I will begin
> The fashion, less without and more within.

It will probably never be clear to Posthumus that this fashion was set before his time, and that even his wife exemplifies it better than he will ever understand. Posthumus is prevailingly an outside man, as we have seen, though he is not vain or proud.

SCENE II

Iachimo seemed to us, when he was securing to himself Posthumus's ring, wholly without conscience. We see now that he has a conscience, and that it has been active; and this return to Britain increases its power upon him. As the armies meet in their first skirmish, Posthumus

Iachimo's active conscience.

seeks out Iachimo, and disarms him. He is thus seen to cherish no gross hatred of Iachimo for being the occasion of his woes. Iachimo, could he have known with whom he fought, would not have expected to be spared.

The battle becomes general. That part of it which is enacted upon the stage shows the capture of King Cymbeline. From some spot of vantage this is seen by Belarius and the lads, who rush in and rally the disheartened Britons. Nothing comes of that until Posthumus, with the strength of the Leonati, joins them. Then Cymbeline is rescued and escorted away. So, somewhat crudely, it must be owned, Shakespeare has forced upon Posthumus a part that will redeem him with the King. In the general break-up we recognise the proconsul, urging Imogen to make good her escape from the place of fighting. It was not her lot to go away from Britain, and be saved new grief, for the war has come to her. Lucius has been tender of his page companion, as is clear.

SCENE III

Posthumus and his comrades have managed, after the rescue of Cymbeline and the general retreat of the invaders, to withdraw and mingle among the British soldiery unnoticed. The excitement of victory is yet too strong to admit of search or inquiry as to their whereabouts. Posthumus has slipped from his nobleman's suit the coarse peasant's frock which enveloped and disguised him during the fight. He is presented to us in conversation with a British

lord, by way of whom he is made to explain the battle more in detail. The resources of Shakespeare's stage did not admit of enacting more than the merest suggestion of the rally and the rout. It now comes out that Belarius and the youths had taken post by some old military works, formed, as it would seem, by trenching the ground and piling up walls of turf. Thus they find themselves in control of a sort of lane or pass, at the head of which four warriors might bar the passage of a considerable force. Posthumus makes no mention of himself as the fourth champion, and the British lord grows incredulous and apathetic. This puts Posthumus out of the best part of his patience. The dialogue ends abruptly, affording Posthumus the chance to tell us how he has sought death, vainly, but is determined not to survive the day. Two British officers appear, with soldiers, and Posthumus is seized and borne away, as we hear proposed, to Cymbeline.

The ancient fortifications.

SCENE IV

Posthumus is in the way of being speedily reconciled to the King. There remains to the play but his penance and his reconciliation with Imogen. With the penance Shakespeare at once proceeds. Posthumus accepts the prospect of execution, and falls asleep speaking to his dead Imogen.

After Posthumus's soliloquy, we come upon matter which is found in the Folio or earliest edition of the play, but can scarcely be considered Shakespeare's.

We pass to the point (l. 152) where Posthumus is waked by his keepers, as the earliest paragraph which seems to show Shakespeare's hand. By the dialogue here, which pretty fully incorporates the element of time, Posthumus is adjusted to what we accept dramatically as his fate, and expiates his errors. Similarly as with Imogen, when her brothers buried her, there is achieved all the spiritual effect of dying, while the death is spared. After this conversation with the Gaoler, a messenger brings orders to unfetter the prisoner, and bring him into the presence of the King. We know from this that the last situation of the play is about to be opened for us. Posthumus notes the dejected air of the Gaoler, and divines that he will not be executed after all. This he calls "good news"; so we know that he is content to live.

Posthumus achieves the spiritual effect of dying.

SCENE V

It is well to study the stage directions at the opening of Shakespeare's scenes. They often tell us as much as the after lines. Here, next the person of the King, stand our old friends of the cave, outranking the lords and officers of the realm. This means that at last the stayers of the flight are found, and have place by the King as the heroes of the hour.

Shakespeare's stage directions.

Cornelius and certain court ladies now introduce themselves. It is a hard jaunt, across Britain to the camp of Cymbeline, for women of their sort. But the author needs them, or will soon need them, as sup-

port to Imogen. Shakespeare is delicately considerate of the proprieties, and will not have his heroine presented to us here in the company of men alone. The subterfuge under which he brings the court dames hither, women doubtless much older than Imogen, is to have them bear out the testimony of Cornelius. Cymbeline affirms that he has never guessed or suspected the baseness of the Queen. There is surely little of the Arviragus penetration in him.

Why court ladies brought to the King's camp.

At this point Lucius and Iachimo, and other chief Roman prisoners, are brought forward. Posthumus follows this guarded company; and after these, and him, at a significant interval, comes Imogen in her page disguises. She has not heard Cornelius tell of the Queen's death, and does not know how her father's heart is altered. Here she stands in, we may be sure, a beautiful new perturbation. Her cave friends and Pisanio are in honour next the King, while Cloten is nowhere in view. Posthumus, clothed in 'Italian weeds,' is not yet confidently recognised as her husband. All her beliefs and theories are in confusion.

The King immediately, without circumstance or formality — there is as little of the monarch in Cymbeline as of the princess in his daughter — addresses Lucius. There is a hint (l. 69) of sarcasm in his first words: —

> Thou com'st not, Caius, *now* for tribute.

The kinsmen of the British slain have demanded

that the principal captives be butchered, and this the King thinks he shall allow. Lucius receives the word with apparent fortitude, but bespeaks (ll. 85–88) that Imogen be spared: —

> . . . never master had
> A page so kind, so duteous, diligent,
> So tender over his occasions, true,
> So feat, so nurse-like.

Arviragus's imagination not inherited from his father.

Cymbeline looks into the face of Imogen, and thinks he has seen it before somewhere, yet does not recognise his daughter. We note again that there is no Arviragus penetration in this mind. But something of her influence comes upon him. He will spare her, and he will spare her master too. That he may not unsay his royal word too lightly, he offers her a boon and tries to make her choose that this shall be the saving of the proconsul's life. To his surprise, she thanks him, but makes no request. Lucius hints to her of his expectation.[1] She answers him with the sternness of an executioner, that there is something that will prevent, that even his life must shuffle for itself. The riddles are multiplying; for here is Iachimo, once a messenger of her husband, wearing her mother's ring. Cymbeline, while she waits, pondering this thing that is bitter to her as death, plies her (ll. 110, 111) anew: —

Iachimo recognised by Imogen.

[1] Lucius is here somewhat belittled from the true type of a Roman commander, in order, apparently, to avoid a disadvantageous contrast with the other male characters of the play. He must not arouse our admiration and sympathy too strongly, lest we be brought into antagonism to the course that Imogen proposes.

Know'st *him* thou look'st on? *Speak.*
Wilt have *him* live? Is *he* thy kin, thy friend?

But her course is already found and resolved on. Iachimo shall declare of whom he obtained her ring; and she will use the King's kindness to her as the means to extort that knowledge.

Iachimo is not so much wanting in penetration as the lady who confronts him. As he begins his story, by summarily confessing that the ring was Posthumus's, and got by villany, her colour changes, much doubtless as it did when (*cf.* I. vi. 11) he gave her the letters, some months since, from her husband. He notes the changed expression, and, as it seems, recognises instantly who it is, and with whom he has to do. This near presence, so suddenly divined, of the woman for whom he has conceived the deepest reverence, unmans him, and he cries out to the King for patience. On recovering himself, he reverts to his iniquitous treatment of Posthumus, which has grown and grown in his consciousness until it has become the chief episode of his life. So he tells it in detail, until he has flashed out the truth that he got his evidence against Imogen by cunning, without her knowledge. Then stalks Posthumus forward in agony, calling for cord, knife, poison, and ingenious torturers, that he may be put at some exquisite expiation of the wickedness that he has committed: —

The chief episode of Iachimo's career.

It is *I*
That all the abhorr'd things o' the earth amend
By being worse than they. *I* am Posthumus,

> That killed thy daughter; — villain-like, I lie —
> That caused a lesser villain than myself,
> A sacrilegious thief, to do 't: the temple
> Of virtue was she, — yea, and she [virtue] herself.
> Spit, and throw stones, cast mire upon me, set
> The dogs o' the street to bay me; every villain
> Be call'd Posthumus Leonatus, and
> Be villany less than 'twas! O Imogen!
> My queen! My life! My wife! O Imogen!
> Imogen! Imogen!

Is it wonder, now, that Imogen comes forward toward this man, holding her arms out, and crying, —

> Peace, my lord! Hear, hear, —

and striving to save him the least instant's further pain? But Posthumus does not know what the page-like figure is that appeals to him. He can think but of interruptions in the theatre, such, that is, as Elizabethan actors suffered and dreaded. He is in too great agony to endure impertinence or mockery even from a new favourite of the King, and he strikes the upstart meddler. She falls swooning to the ground.

The page as pretending to consider Posthumus acting.

Poor Imogen! This seems too much. Why should Shakespeare have ordained this cruel error? Shall we say that it is in keeping with Posthumus's understanding and appreciation of Imogen hitherto, that it is typical of what her lot must be if she is to leave her destiny in Posthumus's keeping? It would be something too harsh to judge his weakness thus. Nor may we quite insist that this is a visual, dramatic allegory of their past wedded life. When he strikes

her, for her sake, we cannot but forgive him. And we recognise that the incident checks our rising enthusiasm for Posthumus, and keeps the hero, relatively to the heroine, in his proper place. When Imogen returns to consciousness, she forgets to disguise her voice, and her father hears once more the tones, 'the tune,' of Imogen.

The blow as keeping the hero in subordination.

Then follow explanations concerning the Queen's cordial, and the court-doctor's ruse. But while these smaller enigmas are being cleared, Imogen has gone to Posthumus, and put her arms about his neck. He seems to have retreated a few steps, after he learns whom he has struck. He cannot presume to draw near her, and she will not wait. There is no reproach, and there is no forgiveness. All things are as if the cruel past had never been.

Imogen will not wait for her husband.

> Why did you throw your wedded lady from you ?
> Think that you are upon a rock, and now
> Throw me again !

Imogen's metaphor is a strong one, and characteristic. Should we say that Posthumus's answering one is equal in confidence and power ?

Imogen begins where she has left off, presuming upon no changes. That the father needs to call for some recognition, at this point, from his daughter, is his fault, not hers. But now, kneeling all dutifully, she asks his blessing. Imogen, we may be sure, has never knelt before to her father, who, before the coming of the new Queen, was not in his home a king. There is a little interval of silence, with Imo-

gen waiting, and her father bending over, and she feels his tears upon her forehead. He is thinking of the strange sight, and of their alienation, and its inhuman cause. The old days, he would have her know, are over; the wicked Queen shall no longer divide their lives. Imogen, thinking his sorrow is for the Queen, essays comfort: —

I am *sorry for 't*, my lord.

Here is a triumph of pathos surely.

The scene and play wait but for their winding up. Pisanio explains of Cloten's departure from the court, and Guiderius of his death. Belarius discloses who the young deliverers are. Guiderius is proved Imogen's brother by the presence upon his neck of a sanguine star like hers. There are other not less palpable marks, as we have seen, of mysterious kinship: they have alike the objectiveness and the simplicity of their father. Arviragus must derive his vision, and his exquisite love of the beautiful, from his mother. Cymbeline, since Imogen is his once more, has been giving her in thought the kingdom. Now, it shall be, not hers, but her elder brother's. This brings regret, for she is dearer than this son, whose worth is yet to learn. Will not she also suffer disappointment at such loss of power? Her answer (ll. 373, 374) is the noblest utterance in the play: —

Arviragus reveals to us the mother.

No, my lord,
I have got *two worlds* by it.

'Two worlds, — my father's home, and mine.' She

would not exchange these for the glamour of a court. And does she not mean also that each brother brings a new, an added existence for herself?

Surely there was never woman more unselfish. Her life is too large, too full, to be absorbed but with her needs and joys. Posthumus is her affinity in this; he does not regret the kingdom. His reconciliation with Cymbeline comes last of all, and Shakespeare slurs it over: — The unselfishness of Imogen.

> *I* am, sir,
> The soldier that did company these three
> In poor beseeming. 'Twas a fitment for
> The purpose I then follow'd.

Cymbeline is kept from pronouncing his acquiescence here by the plea of Iachimo. His contrition is sincere, or he would have begged and connived for his life betimes. He has been saved by his comprehension and worship of Imogen's nobleness and worth; he indeed alone has discerned them fully. Posthumus makes his forgiveness of the man, who has sinned so grievously against his wife, merely incidental. Should he not have referred the case to her? Shakespeare seems to hold not so. As Posthumus puts his bracelet again upon the arm of Imogen, and her ring again upon his hand, he speaks to the kneeling culprit in the divinest human charity, — once known and understood indeed as Christian: — Iachimo alone has discerned Imogen completely.

> Kneel not to me.
> The power that I have on you is to spare you,
> The malice towards you to forgive you. Live,
> And deal with others better.

And Imogen says no word of protest. Cymbeline, who has no truculence or vindictiveness in his nature, commends the clemency, and works in a laconic and dignified amnesty for Posthumus: —

> Nobly doomed!
> We'll learn our freeness of a son-in-law.
> Pardon's the word to all.

We encounter again the absurd trumpery of the label, which we must consistently reject. If we drop out the Soothsayer's paragraph, and Cymbeline's response (ll. 435–452), we shall save to the author something of his deserved and usual dignity in this closing situation. To insure an harmonious and graceful close, the diction takes on nobleness: —

> The fingers of the powers above do tune
> The harmony of this peace.
> . . . Laud we the gods;
> And let our crooked smokes climb to their nostrils
> From our blest altars.

Seldom in Shakespeare have commonplace meanings been cast in more select and virile interpretative diction.

Many readers and critics have taken issue with the author over the forbearance of Posthumus. Iachimo, they say, should have been made to suffer a condign penalty. But it does not appear that Posthumus pardoned the guilt of Iachimo, or that he had the moral right or indeed the power to do this had he so willed. Iachimo's crime was against himself, as he now knows. The most advanced criminal theory of

Punitive *vs.* corrective pursuit of crime.

these times would hold that man has small right to pursue the offences of his fellow except correctively. Imogen did not forgive Posthumus for his attempt against her life, for she refused to take cognizance of the wrong. Posthumus suffered more as the offender than she the victim, and she pitied him. It is to be sure a high plane of existence on which the author takes leave of his heroine and hero, but the play was constituted in part that this plane might be recognized. Such characters and such conduct are unusual, and as the world would judge, unpractical. But the Christ spirit was adjudged unusual and unpractical two thousand years ago. Yet that spirit, in kind, rules mankind to-day. The only question here is a question of degree.

Let us suppose that Imogen had not been large-minded and unpractical when she gave Iachimo his hearing in the first act. Suppose she had been insufficient, in self-estimate, for her integrity, and had attempted vindication for the personal affront. Suppose that Iachimo had not gone away from Britain with the revelation and awe of the truth and nobleness that possessed his soul. Suppose he had come to the battle, not having these forces in him, as inspired by her, but with the same contempt for woman that he professed at first. Would he have opened his heart when Imogen asked him from whom he had obtained her ring? If he had at that time told other than the truth, would Posthumus have known his mistake, and betrayed his grief? If Posthumus had not

The forces that governed Iachimo.

known his mistake and betrayed his grief, what would have been her future or his own? Or, let us suppose, after it is known that Guiderius is Cymbeline's oldest child and heir to the throne, that Imogen or her husband attempt to contest the claim. That would have been practical and usual, yet much to be regretted. After all, deep down in our natures, we are conscious of an affinity to such living, and would fain enact it and see it actualised everywhere about us. We are much nearer this consummation than Shakespeare's generation was, when three hundred years ago he made this study of a noble womanhood. There is no mystery about its triumph. He has formed Imogen's nature and career according to a principle clear to his mind, and formulated long before by another and greater master of human nature, —*Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.* Nobody in the play save Imogen 'inherits' anything. She does not get the kingdom, but possesses the hearts of those who rule. In her amplified and sufficient living those who are about her live and have their being also.

The meaning of the play.

Thus it is clear how Shakespeare is a revealer and interpreter of life. We cannot say that his creation exceeds nature. We are indeed sure that such womanhood has existed and exists to-day. In order that there might be such a daughter, it was necessary to have a king-father that the Queen could hoodwink, and to keep us from greatly caring. The whole court, its history, the

How Shakespeare is an artist.

Queen, Cloten, and indeed Posthumus are but the means of bringing out Imogen's nature, and exist for that end alone. The man who has a great idea or thought, and can create or devise means by which he may communicate it to others and share his experiences of it with them, is what we call an Artist. Shakespeare is thus surely an artist of eminence. He is an artist also because he knows well how to inaugurate causes for the effects he wants, and because he controls our sympathies, making us love what he loves, hate what he hates.

But how did it chance that Shakespeare, who gave his life largely to studies of feminine character, put off the portrait just analysed till almost the end? It is perhaps a common assumption that Shakespeare was not content with the womanly figures that he had painted hitherto, but wished to supplement them with another answering more nearly to his individual and perhaps domestic predilections. There are signs indeed, as we have noted, that *Cymbeline* was written to satisfy a personal rather than a dramatic ideal. Its author had entered the great world, and seen probably some of the most brilliant women of the times, at least in England. He had known Elizabeth, and perhaps admired her; but he painted no portrait, save one, that in the least resembled her. He made the study of a highly subjective and undisciplined feminine nature in Cleopatra, and one even of an inherently false personality in Cressida; but such types did not, except for the moment, engage his mind. It has

Shakespeare's models.

been inferred that he found his ideal by contraries, and in some measure by way of his conjugal experiences and history; but of this there is not so much as a syllable of proof. It is just as likely that he made his Imogen on the model of Anne Hathaway or of his mother. We can at least be sure that Shakespeare wished, in this play, to portray a typical Anglo-Saxon lady, a woman not high-strung or brilliantly imaginative, because such a nature is subjective, liable to moods and ennui, and intolerant of burdens. So he has wrought a home-maker, a domestic paragon, yet, by virtue of her spiritual insight, and her beauty and worth of character, withal a queen. To forestall the paradox, lest we should not believe, he caused her to be born in a king's palace, and invested, in the idea and expectation of the kingdom, with a queen's rights indeed.

Here are potent suggestions concerning Shakespeare, both as an artist and a man. What he must have been as a man, to have made such a study as this proves to be, cannot be doubtful. What he was as an artist is not so easy to comprehend; but the construction of the play in hand has made some things clear. When a man has potential notions of such goodness and worth as Imogen's, which he has never seen, yet knows are veritable and existent in different degrees and forms somewhere in the world, we say that he has vision, or is a seer. Many people have revelations of such high qualities and excellencies of character, but cannot communicate them. All great literature, and

The artist must be first a seer.

all eminence in the world of painting and sculpture and music, is made up of two things, "Seeing and Saying." The man who at once on seeing feels it in his fingers to paint, or carve, or write what has come into his mind, is essentially an artist. So no one can be an artist who does not preconceive some Imogen or like vision of the Beautiful or the True to paint or make a play about. Every man who does have such revelations, and can make everybody else, or many or most people, with a little aid or education, see what he sees and experience the inspiration that he has felt, is an artist, as has been said in part before, typically and truly.

Shakespeare's meanings not translatable into prose.

It will be expedient to alter somewhat the manner of interpreting and appropriating Shakespeare in the remaining pages. We have been trying to make over the meanings of his poetry and art into the literal terms of prose; but this can never be done effectually. A work of art is potential, and adapted to all time. What in it is potential, and not literal, cannot be imparted by mind to mind, but must be personally discerned. To know a play of Shakespeare is like knowing a great picture. One must study it patiently in detail. It takes a month to study a great picture over. It takes more than a month to know a play of Shakespeare's; and no one can make his knowledge do duty for another's. The best that the man who has studied can do, as in the case of a picture, is to show his fellow how to see. No one mind, save the artist's, sees all. Accordingly, in the inspection

of the plays or parts of plays remaining to our purpose, we shall forestall as little as may be ultimate knowledge of the given piece, which it is the reader's right to achieve alone. It is as impertinent in literature as in other fields of art to thrust upon the reader his author's meanings; though the end here, it is believed, has justified some deviation.

# III

## THE WINTER'S TALE

To acquaint us with antecedent circumstances, *The Winter's Tale* is opened with a dialogue between two court gentlemen, much like *Cymbeline*. They explain the extraordinary attachment of King Polyxenes for the King of Sicily, and meet the improbability of the former's prolonged visit with Leontes, somewhat effectually, in advance. Both join in praises of the young prince Mamillius; and this, since his mother may hardly be discussed here by the courtiers, prepares imagination for the introduction of the Sicilian Queen.

Purpose of the opening scene.

But when Leontes and his king friend come before us in Scene ii, we find that their feelings toward each other have undergone of late some change. Polyxenes, with much of rhetorical circumstance and elegance, implies to his comrade that he has stayed long enough, three-quarters of a year, and must be going. He would like to express adequately his thanks, but that would occupy as many months as his entertainment has already lasted. Leontes is bound to reply of course in kind, deprecating the acknowledgment, and urging a yet longer visit. Yet he does not refute the obligation, or make as if the absence of his friend would be displeasing, but on

the contrary implies that Polyxenes, for all his saying, does not mean to go. That makes Polyxenes forget his circumlocutions, and affirm curtly that he shall go to-morrow. But this summariness, in the face of previous dallies, needs explaining, which he attempts. He thinks apparently that he can force his royal host to civility by suggesting that he has stayed so long as to become a burden. Instead of the expected protestings, Leontes implies that this is true, and grimly declares that he has indeterminate capacity to be bored. Polyxenes by this has got as far aside from court parlance as his friend, and farther even, for he despoils his sentence of its verb. Now, surely, these royal gentlemen understand each other. Leontes, not in irony, but for very shame, proposes that his friend remain another week. Polyxenes will not budge from his dignity or his word, and Leontes suggests that they split the difference and put the limit at three days and a half. At this, Polyxenes with some argument, and a little less pique perhaps, begins formal talk once more. No tongue in the world, he affirms, so soon could move him. But, as he is pleased to put it, his affairs do even drag him homeward.

All this while Hermione, the Queen, has been standing in state beside her husband, watching the issue of his attempt to qualify the insult to his guest. The last answer of Polyxenes was of course absurd enough. Leontes will neither contradict it, nor allow the scandal of an immediate departure. So he calls upon the Queen to save him from defeat. And the

snappish manner as well as matter of his words to her show why she has not taken part in the dialogue, and why he has till now ignored her. Leontes is jealous, and is willing to be understood as believing that Polyxenes has made his nine-months stay for the sake of Hermione's society. Hermione has undoubtedly had intimations before, in private, of her husband's feeling; for she takes great pains to avoid asking Polyxenes to remain, while making it virtually impossible for him to stand by his words to her husband. She suggests a compromise, the 'borrow of a week,' being careful to name the same time that Leontes has proposed. She rallies Polyxenes volubly and brilliantly, plying him with feigned and distant importunity, and keeps withal her husband from working in a further word: —

Hermione humours her husband.

You'll *stay?*
No, madam.
Nay, *but* you *will?*
I may not, verily.
Verily!
You put me off with nimble oaths; but *I*,
Though you would seek to unsphere the stars with oaths,
Should yet say '*Sir*, no *going*.' '*Verily*'
You shall *not go*. A lady's 'Verily' is
As potent as a lord's. Will you go *yet*, —
*Force* me to keep you as a prisoner,
*Not* like a guest? So you shall pay your fees
When you depart, and save your thanks. *How* say you?
My *prisoner*, *or* my *guest?* By your dread 'Verily,'
One of them you shall be.
Your guest, then, madam.

We cannot much doubt that Polyxenes, in spite of

the rough handling that he has received, is quite willing to remain. The attentions of Hermione have salved his pride. But he seems wholly invulnerable to the idea that trouble may come to her from seeming to have induced him to change his mind.

Of course there is Camillo, and there are attendants, present. If the kings are not brought together again, there will be talk. We may be sure that the court folk understand the King's feelings, if Polyxenes does not. Hermione, as we notice, changes the subject instantly, and by a turn that she thinks will please her husband; but in her haste to reach a conclusion she is scarcely edifying to his friend: —

> Was not *my lord*
> The verier wag o' the two?

Hermione's self-possession.

Or, is this perhaps to afford Leontes the chance of retreat from his insolence, by pretending it all a jest? This is very likely the Queen's purpose; but her husband fails to use the opportunity, remaining silent and apparently sullen as before. Polyxenes is willing to talk to the point proposed, but steers stupidly and squarely into an implication that the Queen follows up gayly to his discomfiture. Leontes, not liking the freedom or perhaps the topic of their conversation, looks up and asks significantly whether he is 'won' yet. Hermione makes a gentle and considerate answer, at which Leontes petulantly (l. 87) betrays his jealous and narrow spirit: —

> At *my* request he would not!

He adds ironically that she has never spoken to better purpose. This she receives archly and lovingly, making him think of the moment when she confessed herself his. With beautiful chatter she charms from him some pleasant words, and then puts an end to the interview by drawing Polyxenes aside. She sees that there is nothing to be gained by leaving the kings longer together. Hermione's tact.

As Hermione is ushered aside, in Elizabethan court fashion by her guest, Leontes finds a new occasion to indulge his jealousy. Nothing is happening different or differently from what has happened any day these nine months past; but Leontes apparently is finding any attention or civility from Polyxenes to his wife of late unbearable. We recognise this hanging about of Polyxenes — his Queen (*cf.* l. 34) is apparently not living — as preposterous; and while we do not justify Leontes in his jealousy, we cannot blame him much for feeling disturbed. Mamillius, left for the moment by his mother, stands silently near, watching with strange precocity the signs of trouble in his father's face. Though the lad is thoroughly acute and brilliant, he is not yet of years that enable a princely toilet; and his nose is at this moment in need of his mother's handkerchief. We have just been regretting the lengthening moments of her complaisance to Polyxenes, and now this seeming neglect has palpable influence with us to her disadvantage. The doubts of Leontes, voiced openly concerning the lad's paternity, have by no means an idealising effect upon her wifehood. The author is plainly preparing

for another plot of marital misunderstanding, but less tenderly as touching his heroine than in the former play.

The element of time is requisite in establishing relations as significant as these. The author makes Hermione lead her guest back toward Leontes, who finishes his soliloquy and refuses to recognise their approach. Polyxenes addresses him, and without an answer. Hermione speaks to him with more seriousness than hitherto, and Leontes replies civilly to her inquiry. Polyxenes comes in (ll. 164, 165) for a little recognition when Leontes asks: —

> Are *you* as fond of *your* young prince as we
> Do seem to be of ours?

Polyxenes declares that his son is all his exercise, his mirth, his matter, but apparently does not divine the reason why Leontes has thus drawn him out. He seems certainly very comfortable after almost a year's withdrawal from domestic joys. Leontes is more than ever aroused over this naïve exhibition of inconsistency, and goes aside with Mamillius from the pair at once. Manifestly it would not do to leave Hermione and her husband's friend responsible for going apart from the scene, if Leontes is to stay. To clear the stage for the next turn of the plot, Leontes is made to send Mamillius off by himself to play.

It would have in some respects been better if Camillo had been left out of the scene. But the author wished him to be a witness to the yielding of

Polyxenes, and the jealous conduct of Leontes. Furthermore, to make a new scene begin here would exalt the subordinate matter and action following to an equality with what has just preceded. So the author has the King call Camillo to his presence. He alludes to Polyxenes's continued stay, and finds Camillo, — for a very different reason from what he suspects, ready to talk. Then begins the evolution of Camillo's consent to serve as the King's tool. We see that Leontes is naturally a very jealous man, or he would not wish his life-long friend killed for mere suspicion. He is a Sicilian, and exhibits somewhat of the intense and summary hatred peculiar to his race. Camillo is honest as courtiers go, and makes sure, before he engages to poison Polyxenes, that the King will not proceed publicly or otherwise against Hermione. He also makes Leontes promise to treat his guest in a manner that will avert all possible suspicion.

The evolution of Camillo's consent.

At this point, were the subject-matter here what is usual in the first act of a play, another scene might be begun. But the author has peculiar material in hand, and is without need or wish to develop into dramatic fulness as elsewhere. He is really in haste, as seems, to have done with this part of the plot. Leontes is made to leave the stage, that we may hear, from Camillo in a soliloquy, that he does not blame the Queen, and that he has no least intention of doing the King's will. Polyxenes is then brought in once more, receives scant courtesy at first from Camillo, and tells of a fresh snub from the

King. Thus the resolution for his flight is easily evolved. We are glad to hear his consternation (ll. 417–424) at Leontes's charge, and to know, —

I saw his heart in 's face, —

that, in spite of his Bohemian heaviness and slowness, he has seen more than he has been willing to own or realise. And so the royal guest sneaks away, by the postern gates, from his friend's palace, never for a moment thinking of the effect his flight may have upon the destiny or welfare of the Queen.

Hermione is perhaps not greatly surprised at the outbreak of Leontes, and does not seem troubled at the treatment he has accorded his life-long friend. She is not sensitive over the matter, so far as it concerns herself, and will scarcely think of taking her husband to task for his unkingly escapade. The curtain rises next probably at some time in the forenoon of the day following the last scene. Polyxenes and Camillo seem not to have taken ship till after daylight. The central, subordinating figure in the group now shown is Mamillius, who prefers his mother to the sports and playthings of the royal nursery, and has wearied her with his exactions. The smutched nose no longer witnesses imaginatively against her motherly offices and regard. That was but for the moment, while the author was making us look at Hermione, in some measure, from her husband's eyes.

Mamillius's playfellow is his mother.

It is a situation singularly in contrast with the scene preceding. The pervading strength of Her-

mione's personality is discerned everywhere, and particularly in the domestic, substantial character of the women whom she has chosen as her court companions. Mamillius discourses against the First Lady, who has forced too many hard hugs and baby caresses upon him. He tries to tell why he likes the Second Lady better,— that something in her face, which he is sure is not in the forehead, but gets lost in attempting to trace because of his general lore in eyebrows. It is not so rare that a lad of five should see acutely; but that he should say wisely, and generalise ingeniously, surprises even the court women who have watched him since his birth. It is not surely from his father that he has inherited or acquired this wisdom.

It is thus not strange that Hermione's women talk to Mamillius as if he were much older than he is. The mother, rested now, asks for her son again. He comes back to her, not with a run, and a leap into her lap, but sedately, stopping some steps from her; and he begs for nothing, not so much even as a story. It is she indeed who requests the story, and from him. We can hear his boyish tones, almost, as (ll. 23, 25) he speaks of his repertoire, and asks his mother's will: —

> Merry or sad shall 't be?
> A sad tale 's best for winter. I have one
> Of sprites and goblins.

Most children can be scared pretty effectually, as listeners, by tales of ghosts. Here is one who frightens his mother by telling them; and she

proudly confesses that he is powerful at it. He stands like an orator to begin; but she makes him sit upon her knee. Though she has interrupted him, he completes his sentence without restarting, — a rhetorical feat not usual to his years. Dr. Furness suggests that the 'crickets,' who are not to hear, are the court women, and thus solves an unusually hard puzzle of the text. We may understand that the First and Second Lady are withdrawn a little, that the boy and his mother may exchange confidences if they will.

It is a beautiful moment which we could have wished prolonged. But we are not permitted to hear more than the first softly uttered sentence, for without is heard the excited stride of intruding feet. Without request or permission Leontes and his lords push their way into the Queen's apartments. News from the harbour has just come to the King, and started him, half crazed, to find the Queen. The flight of Polyxenes has done the mischief, for this to Leontes in his present mood is tantamount to an admission of guilt. Leontes has undoubtedly heard the details of the flight, but to avoid telling Hermione anything directly he makes the First Lord repeat some items. He assumes, or affects to assume perhaps, that she knows already, yet will pretend ignorance or ask some question. We may be sure that she looks on him with calm, firm eyes, with no expectation of evil, and that he does not find it easy to meet her gaze. Since it is impossible to address her, he flatters himself to the First Lord

Leontes hesitates to address the Queen.

over the soundness of his suspicions, and rehearses his wrongs, expecting perhaps to include at least some reference to the Queen's share in the conspiracy against his life. Since Hermione, as he thinks, refuses to take his meaning, he snatches Mamillius from her. She asks him, wonderingly, if this is sport. It is time, evidently, to make her understand his feelings, but he cannot accuse her even yet directly. His evasion is to speak to the lords, bid them —

> Look on her, mark her well. Be but about
> To say 'she is a goodly lady,' and
> The justice of your hearts will thereto add
> ''Tis pity she's not honest, honourable.'

It is a painful paragraph, though more painful to him who speaks than to those who hear. When Hermione has learned at last the ground of his trouble, she makes (ll. 78–81) only this strong and kindly answer, —

> Should a villain say so,
> The most replenished villain in the world,
> He were as much more villain. You, my lord,
> Do but mistake.

There is no rebuke, or anger, or personal feeling in this reply; but there is lofty, disinterested sorrow for the man who has fallen beneath himself, and is preparing for humiliation. The conviction and certitude of these words anger Leontes worse than sarcasm or abuse, could she have used them, would have done. For the moment he dares address her directly, but he quickly goes back to his device of speaking to

her, over the lord's shoulders, in the third person. He charges her with being a traitor, and having made Camillo her accomplice, and being aware of the late escape. He probably knows better, but he is trying to scandalise her, and break in any way possible her exasperating repose. The result is worse failure than before. She betrays no sign of surprise or pain. She is still but sorry for his mistakes, his suffering.

> No, by my life,
> Privy to none of this. How will this grieve you,
> When you shall come to clearer knowledge, that
> You thus have publish'd me! Gentle my lord,
> You scarce can right me throughly then to say
> You did mistake.

She is helpless, but will not acknowledge it. Since she will pretend that she cares nothing for her husband's abuse and insults, he will make her feel his power. He orders her forth to prison, and condemns beforehand all who would plead in her behalf. Hermione is not dismayed or even worried at the prospect.

> There's some ill planet reigns.
> I must be patient till the heavens look
> With an aspect more favourable.

Evil cannot always or long prevail. She is willing to wait until it shall give way. She excuses to the lords her lack of tears, and declares her submission to the King's will. It is a moment of sublime triumph. Strange strength is abroad, surrounding her and upholding her, making her more than human to those who see her and hear

Hermione's faith.

her speak. It seems to Leontes that he has been silenced, that her words drown out his royal order. Nobody, indeed, remembers it or is conscious of its authority, and Leontes actually cries out, as in helplessness, that he may have back his rights. After a little silence, while the whole company stands awe-bound yet, Hermione is heard requesting of the King that her women may be with her in the prison. Leontes seems not to hear, for there is no consenting or other sound at all, save the weeping of the women. Then Hermione, after some words (ll. 118–124) of comfort to the attendants and of farewell to her husband, —

> Do not weep, good fools;
> There is no cause. . . . This action I now go on
> Is for my better grace. — Adieu, my Lord:
> I never wished to see you sorry; now,
> I trust, I shall, —

withdraws herself from her home and son. When, of her own motion, followed by her women, she has gone some steps on the way toward prison, Leontes repeats his order to the halberd men. They do not arrest her, but follow her, escort her, along the path that she is choosing.

After she is gone, and the soldiers who attend her are out of sight, the First Lord breaks the silence, begging Leontes to call the Queen again. He does not speak. The First Lord and Antigonus plead. It all comes to nothing, except to prepare for the knowledge that Leontes has applied already to Apollo's oracle for enlightenment, which circum-

stance makes it seem that he had not at first intended to put Hermione in prison. Of course the appeal to the oracle at Delphi is absurd, as the play is not laid in pre-Christian times. But Shakespeare is in substance dramatising Greene's novel of *Dorastus and Fawnia*, first printed in 1588, and very popular; and Greene, who knew better, makes use of this anachronism in that work.

Shakespeare does not change Greene's errors.

The character of Hermione, as now left with us, calls for some melioration and relief. She is not in the least unwomanly, but her self-sufficiency and strength seem beyond the measure of her sex. Besides, it may be that we have retained from the second scene of Act I, where she was presented in such a way as to account in part for her husband's jealousy, some impressions of indelicacy and boldness. That he may remove all hint of mannishness, Shakespeare introduces Paulina, a character not found in Greene, in the next scene. As soon as we have sighted her, and discerned her type, we forget even the most distant suggestion of such qualities in the Queen. Like things are done in the modulation of warm effects in painting, and in the toilettes of women. Too insistent depths of hue, too great heaviness or indeed brilliancy of colouring, are alleviated by some touch of new pigment, by a sash or ribbon in the complemental shade. The first need here is to humanise and soften Hermione's repose of will.

The uses of Paulina.

There is another purpose, as we at once discern,

why a Paulina must be forthcoming to the plot. Hermione, since immurement in the prison, has given birth to a daughter; and it is necessary that this daughter be exposed on the coasts of Bohemia; for Greene makes that country to have been maritime. The motive for the casting out of the child has been preparing ever since the length of Polyxenes' stay at the court of Sicily was shaped. Leontes will deny the paternity of the child, — so much is clear; and the plot will make him attempt to destroy its life. But how is the child to be brought into Leontes's power? He must not take it from Hermione by force; we should revolt at that. A Paulina is needed who, with all-compelling yet mistaken reasons, shall require it from its mother, and commend it to its father. The second scene makes us acquainted with the character of Paulina, and outlines the plan by which she is to do her work.

The casting out of the child.

It is, however, no small task that the author has proposed. We shall not easily consent to the casting out of Hermione's babe, though only in a play. There must be new and more complete compulsion; there must be all the circumstance and inevitableness of real life. We may be sure that Shakespeare divines this better than we can, and that he will make his causes yield none but just conclusions. At the opening of scene iii, we find that he has been at work, in thought, to meet the exigencies of the case. He has arrayed new forces on the side opposite to the Queen, and in the person of her husband. The spirit with which she has

borne her wrongs would have conquered him, were he not too proud to yield. Her silence is an indictment of his good sense. Her quiet waiting for the vindication of her integrity maddens him. No such moment must be allowed to come. He will destroy her, and rid himself of fears lest she be innocent. She has pained him enough, in any case, to merit death. By thus showing Leontes determined to burn Hermione at the stake, unless her innocence be proved, the author makes us subordinate the fate of the child to hers for the time being; and we shall not know what becomes of her for two scenes yet. So we are prepared, by the new truculence of Leontes, to make unexpected concessions to the plot.

The King is, besides, in a state of unwonted irritability from lack of sleep. He has taken upon himself to instruct his son in his mother's shames; and these, he believes, have induced the sickness of which he tells. But we know that it is his pursuit of the boy's mother that has wrought the mischief. We see now why the author has given Mamillius an understanding so far beyond his years. He is wanted as a factor in the coming tragedy.

Of all moments in the play, it is now that Paulina chooses to appear, bringing the Queen's babe before the King. Such women have no idea of times or seasons. They are as nettles to weak nerves. Leontes stands in awe of Hermione's womanly strength; and any suggestion of her nature in an aggressive or shrewish form will be especially exasperating to him now. He appears to have charged

Antigonus to keep his wife away; and the answer (ll. 44, 45) of that henpecked nobleman, —

> I told her so, my lord,
> On your displeasure's peril, *and on mine*, —

seems, for the moment, as amusing to the half-insane Leontes as to us. The situation at any rate is not acute until Paulina announces that she has come from his good Queen. She bandies words with him, till he orders his guards to force her from the room. She threatens to scratch out the eyes of any one who shall lay hand on her, holding the babe in her arms the while.

It is evidently the author's purpose to produce a situation intense enough to cover the transfer and removal of the child. It is interesting to watch the steps by which he advances to the solution of his problem. He first makes Paulina, who cannot imagine that any harm will befall the child, lay it down, as from the Queen, at the King's feet. Leontes commands Antigonus to take it up, but that nobleman does not obey. Then follows a heated parley. The King charges Paulina with having lately beaten her husband. Neither Antigonus nor his wife denies this, or seems to think it of any moment. Paulina is tactless enough to attempt the identification, to the lords, of the King's features in the face of the child. Leontes is less violent over this than could have been expected, having reached, for that matter, something like a climax of passion before the opening of the scene. He declares that he will have her burnt, but

she defies him all the same. He then bids the guards, on their allegiance, to hale her forth. They approach, and we expect a scene. Thus is our attention drawn away from the child, as a centre of interest, to Paulina, who does not after all resist but goes docilely away.

The protector of the child is now removed; so much of the task is done. Leontes now turns to Antigonus, and bids him carry the babe away, and see it immediately committed to the flames; this, in punishment for obedience to his wife instead of to himself. Shakespeare gives us a good scare here, making us believe that he intends that fate. But he means merely to frighten us, dramatically, with this prospect of death, that we may consent to the lesser evil. He has but to make the lords beseech for the child's life, to win the King's consent that it shall not die, but be exposed instead. As the tool for this dastardly deed he has prepared Antigonus. Except that this man had been henpecked so thoroughly, he would have withheld consent.

The need of an Antigonus.

Even with all these forces arrayed against Hermione's child, we should scarcely have consented to the plot, save for the sudden news that the messengers from Delphi are returned. We believe that in this lies hope for both.

The third act, as will be noted, opens usually in Shakespeare with new elements and new action. The first scene here is meant in part to show us in advance that the visit to Delphi

Proof of the visit to Delphi.

has been really made; for it will be in due time alleged that the oracle is ungenuine. Properly, save for the deviation and delay, the temple at Delphi should be shown; we should have had some direct experience of the magnificence of the place and the stateliness of the ceremony, and seen Cleomenes and Dion receive the sealed-up responses from the priest. But what we have is an effectual substitute. We see the messengers hastening for Hermione's sake, and we hear them tell of what they have seen and how they have been impressed; and we are as a matter of course persuaded, though unconsciously, that they have been at Delphi, and that they believe they are rendering the Queen true service.

The second scene opens with a court assembly. Leontes has probably found out that there is a strong sentiment in the kingdom against the imprisonment of his Queen, in her condition, on mere suspicion. 'Let us be *cleared*,' he says, 'of being tyrannous; since we *so openly* proceed in justice.' Then he bids the officers produce the prisoner; and, after a little interval, while we have time to be impressed with the augustness and formalities of the tribunal, Hermione is ushered in. Though unaware, perhaps, of our feelings toward her, we have surely been waiting for this moment. Hermione has lost nothing in our sight since she so grandly went forth to prison. Paulina is her closest attendant and will be soon in requisition, we may assume, in the same manner as before.

The trial of the Queen.

It is no English court of justice. In Greene's

novel there is mention of a jury; but Shakespeare will invite no feelings of reverence for this trial. The King is both prosecutor and judge. Hermione appears without advocate or counsel. But she feels no need of either. When the indictment is read she rises and (ll. 23–29) begins to address the court: —

> Since what I am to say must be but that
> Which contradicts my accusation, and
> The testimony on my part no other
> But what comes from myself, it shall scarce boot me
> To say 'not guilty.' Mine integrity
> Being counted falsehood, shall, as I express it,
> Be so received.

She feels no personal indignation or concern. She does not hope that she will be cleared; but she is sublimely persuaded that right is more potent than injustice, and that her endurance of wrong will in the end defeat the malice of her persecutors.

> But thus: *if* powers divine
> Behold our human actions, — *as they do*,
> I doubt not then but *innocence* shall make
> *False accusation blush* and *tyranny*
> *Tremble at patience.*

Hermione's faith in the power of truth.

Her absolute, unshrinking faith in moral order has allied the powers of the universe in her defence, and made the august tribunal seem but a cheap and sorry spectacle. Leontes had very likely persuaded himself that by the pomp and ceremony of his conclave of judges and lords and doctors learned in the law he could awe her and break her will. He finds this array of authority very inadequate to the humiliation and silencing

of such a prisoner. She is greater in her integrity than all the judicature of the realm. He essays to beat down her dignity by domestic retorts. With almost divine consideration, ignoring his carping, spiteful humour, she speaks to the petty questions that he raises, arguing with sublime fervour. It is withal a woman's pleading through and through.

> More than mistress of
> What comes to me in name of *fault*, I must not
> At all acknowledge.

When the King attempted first to accuse Hermione, before her women and Mamillius, in the first scene of the last act, he was put to summary and stern confusion. That was but a personal attack. The attempt here has been to impugn her publicly, as Queen of Sicily, and to exploit the national machinery of justice against her. The failure has been even more abject and pitiable. 'Nature stretcheth out her arms,' says Emerson, 'to man, only let his thoughts be of equal greatness.' The majesty of Hermione's mind has subordinated the pride and power of Sicily. Leontes has no resource but to make new and absurd allegations, and affirm that her fate is sealed already. This stirs no rebellious feeling, for very different sentiments (ll. 92–97) possess her wholly: —

Leontes loses his kingly dignity.

> Sir, spare your threats.
> The bug you would fright me with I seek.
> To me life can be no commodity.
> The crown and comfort of my life, your favour,
> I do give lost, for I do feel it gone,
> But know not how it went.

That her husband has not forfeited her affection, in spite of all that he has done to extinguish it, that she misses it and desires it even in these moments of abuse, touches the extreme of pathos, and gives us the measure of her character and devotion.

The climax of the scene is quickly reached. Hermione appeals from the King to the lords, and the court at large, and asks for the decision of the oracle. No one has the right of speech in sessions save with the King's permission; but the First Lord declares fearlessly that the appeal is just, and demands, in Apollo's name, that the messengers be sent for. There is a spell upon the company, and the officers feel the summons of a higher law than the King's will. They bring in Cleomenes and Dion quickly. The oath is administered, the seals are broken, and the head officer reads the findings of Apollo's court:—

> *Hermione is chaste; Polyxenes blameless; Camillo a true subject; Leontes a jealous tyrant; his innocent babe truly begotten; and the king shall live without an heir, if that which is lost be not found.*

We may be sure that hearts beat hard throughout the audience, as the officer reads these ringing sentences. When he has finished, the lords break out into exclamations of gratitude to Apollo. Hermione shows no such excitement, being heard to utter but the one word, *Praised!* Leontes impugns the oracle, and proposes to push the sessions forward even to the sentencing of the Queen. But a servant runs in distractedly, and interposes a message from the palace. Mamillius, with merely imagining what has happened

or will happen to his mother, on this day of her trial, what with his sickness and anxiety hitherto, has passed away. Hermione listens with firm nerves. Then she hears Leontes say that he has not been sincere in his jealousy, that he has pursued her and distressed her with injustice. That is too much, and she falls in a dead swoon.

Hermione overcome only by the confession of her husband.

Then all is changed in this august judgment hall. There is no confusion, no babbling of tongues, for every eye is fixed upon the King. Never since he took the crown has he been such an object of interest as now. He is implor- ing Apollo to be forgiven for his profaneness against the oracle. In the face of all the jurisconsults and lords and doctors he is heard confessing his plot against Polyxenes, and detailing how he threatened and bribed Camillo to become his tool. He was too proud before to bow to the moral superiority of his Queen. Now the gods have humbled him in the sight of all the kingdom. And he is withal wholly contrite and content.

Leontes crucifies his pride.

The court scene has done its work. But the author is evidently unwilling to close it here, and leave with us certain drastic impressions that it has made. He will subordinate it and merge it in a situation that shall make amends to its intended vic- tim. Paulina turns the undismissed sessions into an arraignment of the plaintiff King, and reads against him a feminine indictment that stirs our pity. The bitterness of this invective is then utilised as the occa-

Further use of Paulina.

sion of making Pauline relent, and beg, with tears, forgiveness from the King. Thus, with vehement speed, is the wicked and cruel past, so necessary to the plot, lifted from our consciousness, and a brighter future prepared for. There is but the exposing of the child to be enacted, and this is quickly added in another scene. The author keeps us from revolt by new and stronger indignation against Antigonus. This is achieved by making him dream of Hermione weeping, as in punishment, and imploring him to carry her child to Bohemia. When he salves his conscience for doing the King's villany by insisting against his better light that the child will be laid upon the earth of its right father, we are done with him. The poetic justice of his being torn in pieces by the bear, a turn analogous to the taking off of Cloten in the former play, draws away our thought from the babe, which is at no moment out of protection or our sight. At the beginning of the shepherd's talk, on his discovery of the child, the play passes over from tragedy to comedy.

Our consent to the exposure of the child.

There are marked differences here from the conception and treatment of the main figure in *Cymbeline*. In that drama Imogen conquers, without intending resistance, in a domestic, wifely way, by influences of meekness and goodness that go out from her being. Hermione is stronger in presence and personality, and prevails in a truly heroic mood. Imogen was accused by her husband in absence, with only a trusty servant to

Imogen's unepic victory.

share the secret of her disgrace. Hermione is maligned by her husband personally and in presence, in the hearing or knowledge of all the kingdom. Imogen's beautiful patience is thoroughly ruffled, for the moment, by the perfidious and unmanly conduct of Posthumus. Hermione does not resist the evil purposes of her husband by so much as a frown. He does not find it possible to goad her into recalcitrant feeling against him. He loses in consequence the support and sympathy of his lords, and his own self-respect. He is discomfited, disarmed, humiliated. We cannot very confidently explain the secret of Hermione's triumph, or declare the philosophy of such a rout. Examples of the like have been too few for study. We remember that a great master of human wisdom once prescribed such a course as Hermione has pursued, and by it indeed rose to the chief place in human history. It seems clear that from evil when as here unresisted, not for the glorification of the saint, but from pity of the sinner, indeterminate power for good may spring.

Hermione resists not evil.

It is thus evident that we have in Hermione a study of character in important respects supplemental to Imogen; and there are reasons for supposing it a later creation. It is not at all likely that Shakespeare intended to dramatise an important doctrine from the Sermon on the Mount. He is not attempting to compose a religious play. He may indeed have been all unaware that the principle on which he built Hermione's greatness was other than a fundamental law of human nature. He was just finishing his career as a

dramatic artist, and could have scarcely been concerned, more than in *Cymbeline*, about the popularity of the piece. In no dramas beside has he allowed such incongruities and absurdities of plot as in these two. Did the coarse watermen and street loafers understand what was put before them in the impersonations of Hermione and Perdita and Imogen? We may reasonably doubt whether the acting showed these women as fully as we have had them revealed to us. But the Globe and the Blackfriars could not surely have been ill places to go to, if there and there alone in England and all Christendom were the influences that we have been experiencing, from these characters, supplied in a literary way. No such womanhood as Hermione's or Imogen's had been portrayed before, nor has seemingly the counterpart of either been conceived or painted since. Imogen's childlike, spontaneous feminine nature, which she does not repress, is supremely beautiful. But Hermione's character, in its saintly faith and Christly self-repression, touches the heights of the sublime.

The influence of these plays on Shakespeare's audiences.

In Shakespeare's dramas there is always a subjective climax at the middle of the third act; such events are placed or shaped there as enable us to divine the outcome of the play. We are sure, for instance, here that the Queen will live, that the child will be brought back, and that Hermione will be reconciled to her husband. But we must not rate this prefigurement of the plot issue as of large importance. The play that we have

The outcome prefigured at the middle of a play.

in hand is not a play of incident. It makes little difference, as such, whether Hermione sustains the revelation of her husband's baseness, or succumbs to it. The lesson of her constancy and largeness of soul proceeds with us in either outcome equally. She is endowed and prepared to achieve a singularly beautiful and complete existence. Shakespeare recognised that only such are fittest to survive, and has made her live; though the heroine of Greene's novel has no such fortune. By the offices of Paulina, the Queen, who does not wish to see her husband, is kept apart from the palace. By dint of certain juggling, for which she is not responsible, and which we need not be curious about, she is reported dead, and ostensibly carried to her grave in public funeral; and Leontes is allowed, for years following, to show his grief daily at her monument.

This part of the plot is surely far from pleasing; and were it not for the importance of the personality that it is used to reveal, would have proved wholly unacceptable. To some expounders and critics, who have apparently not discovered what the play was written for, it has seemed absurd. Shakespeare could undoubtedly have devised a better scheme. Yet, when we have come to know his conception of Hermione, we are not so sure that he would have exchanged it, under any circumstances, for one that we should call a better. There is no chain of causation here of the kind that was found in *Cymbeline*. Hermione has no such influence on those surrounding her as

The Sublime not equally attractive with the Beautiful.

Imogen exerts, because no one with power to aid her has understood her. The lords have divined something of her nature, so have her women, but both are powerless to change her fate. Mamillius has discerned her best, in his degree, but that understanding has cost him his life. The husband is wholly incapable of recognising the differences between her and any other woman, with equal beauty, of half her worth. She has not indeed discovered or understood herself; such natures never do. The most saintly and complete in character and living are least aware of the truth and nobleness and charity that make them different from their fellows. Hermione is pathetically lone and solitary in her greatness, and this it is that has well-nigh wrought her martyrdom. But she does not know the source of her misfortunes. Only the author, and the reader whom he lends eyes to see, understand her secret.

Hermione a lone and solitary figure.

The great-souled live mainly, perforce, apart, in the solitudes of their own being. Imogen spent most of the hours of her work and waiting, in the play called *Cymbeline*, with no one to share or enhance her inmost living. Even Posthumus, restored, will approach but distantly to her true self, and will fall far short of completing her existence, though she will never know. An Emerson is at best but a good listener; he cannot be social in his seership. So a deeply spiritual nature, except it give itself to public utterance or ministerings, as Hermione cannot, will fail of appreciation and may be grossly

misapprehended. Hermione has grown up from girl to woman in a fascinating, but strange reserve. Her quantum of personality has attracted to her a wooer; she has been wedded, and made a queen. But there is nothing in this which has merged her real existence, or materially enlarged it. It is the curse of such natures, men as well as women, that they overestimate the spiritual wealth of other people, and seldom wed where they shall grow. Hermione has become a mother, and yet her best of living has been apart from her children. She is not unmotherly, but the motherhood in her is not paramount, and does not subordinate or absorb her life. Leontes, expecting perhaps a partner that should be centred in himself, has missed the wifehood and motherhood that cannot be. He finds in Hermione a sufficiency and dignity that seem to leave him, her lord and husband, supernumerary, and this furnishes him with a grievance. When he has observed that this very superior wife of his has become an object of interest to his friend, he is betrayed into seizing it as an occasion to subordinate her, and humiliate her, and usurp her eminence, though he knows there has been no guilt. A queen of an intellectual and spiritual stature no greater than his own would have furnished no occasion for misunderstandings.

Hermione's fascinating reserve.

The limitations of the plot, as the necessity of a Perdita born after the opening of the play, and betrothed long before its close, are the most serious that Shakespeare anywhere grapples with, and with an

inferior heroine would have spoiled the play. There are sixteen years of waiting to which the reader must be conciliated, and for which some sort of artistic justification must be devised. To have Hermione stay away from her husband, for this period, in anger or from mere spite, would of course spoil all. Hermione has no vindictive feeling, no least desire to exact suffering from him in proportion to the suffering he has brought on her. She does not propose to forgive and forget, for the matter lies not in her choice. "The King shall live without an heir, if that which is lost be not found." The meaning of the gods to her is plain: she must not return to her husband until her daughter is brought back to her. She who resists not evil by so much as a word, a look, can await with the same infinite patience the higher will. The sublime truth in her character shines out again (V. iii., 123–128) in her words, after the deliverance, to Perdita: —

Hermione not unwilling to return to her husband.

> Tell me, mine own,
> Where hast thou been preserv'd, where liv'd, how found
> Thy father's court? For thou shalt hear that I,
> Knowing by Paulina that the oracle
> Gave hope thou wast in being, have preserv'd
> Myself to see the issue.

And sixteen years to such a woman, as grand and unwavering as Athene herself, are as a little space, as a watch in the night. So the absurdities of a plot may become its power.

*Cymbeline* appears in the Folio of 1623 in the list of tragedies, while *The Winter's Tale* is entered as a

comedy. Neither of these plays appears to have been printed earlier. It is probable that this distinction, which it has been the fashion to retain, was ordained by Shakespeare on the production of the plays. There seems at first small reason to account *The Winter's Tale* as more comedial, except for the part of Autolycus, and of the satyr dancers at the sheep-shearing festival. Some discussion of other differences will be attempted later. We might imagine that Imogen was born of nearer sympathies than the rival heroine, except for the surpassingly tender close of *The Winter's Tale*. We find manifested here the same gentleness and charity, as in *Cymbeline*, toward the men of the play, who, not excepting Florizel, are again a sorry lot. The presence of the second Hermione, in the person of her grown-up daughter, in the fourth act, adds an idyllic charm. We could have wished the treatment of Perdita reserved for another play. She is perforce subordinated to her mother, and is withdrawn from our sight at the close with many undeveloped residues of strength and goodness.

*The Winter's Tale* as comedy.

We seem admitted to something like a vision of Shakespeare's mysterious and evasive personality when he begins to paint a Perdita or Miranda. There is a beautiful optimism in his spirit and in his working which makes everything abroad seem sweetened and transfigured. We feel that he has secrets of life which we might win from him, and with them make this old world young. Yet we are persuaded that the

A vision of Shakespeare's personality.

world is a good place to live in as it is. We believe more in ourselves, finding that we are not so cheap and paltry and insignificant as we have thought. Yet Shakespeare's great women do not strive or cry or agonise after unattained or unattainable ideals. They do not preach or patronise, being just as innocent of their high estate and how they came by it as we of ours. They are suns severally of their social systems, and the men revolve about them as satellites. They are manifestations, in Shakespeare's view, of the divine, by which God administers himself to the world and uplifts man and society at large to nobler living. And the divine, Shakespeare seems to say, never coerces or repels, but charms, allures, by its sovereignty of nature.

Perdita between Hermione and Imogen.

We are interested, of course, in comparing the grown-up daughter, for whom the plot has been delayed, with Hermione her mother. We discern in Perdita little of her father's quality. She lacks somewhat of her mother's strength; there is less of the sublime and more of beauty in her nature. We may say that she stands midway between Hermione and Imogen. The author makes us know her by photographing her in a series of situations, all false ones, and as taxing and unfair as the rôle accepted by her mother when she was set the task of detaining Polyxenes by her husband. Perdita has grown up in the home of the shepherd, without suspicion of her rank, and has found her life large enough and promising enough, in spite of its distance from the great world. Florizel, son of King

Polyxenes, chancing to follow his falcon across the shepherd's pastures, which have been increased by the use of the foundling's treasure to almost fabulous holdings, has seen her and been drawn to woo her by her strange dignity and grace. He has represented himself, under the name of Doricles, as the owner of a great sheep-farm like her father's. He is shown to us, at the opening of scene iv, in a shepherd's frock, put on over his court doublet, while he has persuaded Perdita to appear in costly robes and finery brought from the palace. She has deferred to her lover's wishes, but finds no pleasure in elegance that belies her station and forces her to outshine the shepherd girls and swains, whom she is waiting to receive as guests at the sheep-shearing festival.

Thus is the son of Polyxenes characterised to us at the outset by his willingness to exploit his inamorata before her friends. For his part, he affects a costume much more foreign to his character than hers to her. Florizel is a thoroughly pastoral personage, as his name betokens, but of the sort begotten by poetry and not by sheepfolds. He is a very proper young man, free wholly from vices incident to courts, but a little flighty and pedantic in some conceptions of common things. 'You are,' he affirms to Perdita, —

> no shepherdess, but Flora
> Peering in April's front. This your sheep-shearing
> Is as a meeting of the petty gods,
> And you the queen on't.

But more exactly, Florizel is used, as all the men in

both plays have been used, to speed the treatment of the heroine in hand.

So the author, wishing first to try Perdita, before us, as mistress of the feast, makes her foster-mother to have died since last year's festival. He wishes us to see what resources, what self-assertion, his Queen's daughter can summon for the part that she is called to play. There is a bashful company of country folk to welcome and manage, and she has no boldness beyond the least of her companions to stand her in stead. There are no conventionalities behind which she may mask herself; she must make her own social forms and phrases. The presence of Florizel, as her lover, without the disposition to aid her with her guests, but with all confidence that she will entertain them "sprightly," does not lessen her embarrassment. Before she has conceived her rôle, her father, himself not well knowing what should be done, covers his insufficiency by scolding her for her silence and delay. To add to the burdens of the moment, two strangers, evidently of no mean station, are brought to her notice as demanding hospitable attention. She addresses herself at once to these, and, in default of better compliment, gives them flowers that suit well with their apparent years. The strangers, who are Polyxenes and Camillo, disguised as old men, affect to be displeased with the "flowers of winter" that she has given them. Perdita very prettily attempts to mend her blunder, and the King leads her into argument, that he may sound her wit. She admits

Perdita makes her own social forms.

his logic, but refuses the personal conclusion. He has touched her convictions, and put her in possession of her strength. From this moment the Hermione nature in her rules the company. Camillo ventures a court compliment, which he perhaps assumes will upset her and make her silly, but she meets him with a subordinating answer. Turning from the great gentlemen, whom she has welcomed, according to her own interpretation of first principles, in a wholly original and queenly way, she greets (ll. 112–129) her girl friends from the neighbouring farmhouses, half lost in the exercise of her rare insight into the world of beauty: —

> Now, my fair'st friend,
> I would I had some flowers o' the spring that might
> Become *your* time of day; and *yours*; and *yours*. O Proserpina,
> For the flowers now, that frighted thou let'st fall
> From Dis's wagon! Daffodils,
> That come before the swallow dares, and take
> The winds of March with beauty. Violets dim,
> But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
> Or Cytherea's breath. Pale primroses,
> That die unmarried, ere they can behold
> Bright Phœbus in his strength. Bold oxlips, and
> The crown imperial. Lilies of all kinds,
> The flower-de-luce being one. O, these I lack,
> To make *you* garlands of, and my sweet friend,
> To strew *him* o'er and o'er.

With such refinement of spirit, such vision, Perdita cannot but win Camillo to her side. Polyxenes will not, of course, admit the evidence of her worth, finding her mistress of but a herdsman's home. To him a princess can be no princess except as con-

stituted by pedigree and environment. But Shakespeare's lesson of rank is plain, and is made still plainer later on by satire. Neither Leontes nor Polyxenes can by any possibility be royal. There are no kingly folk save such as have kingly minds, and live princely lives. Shakespeare is inferred to have been of aristocratic sympathies. The talk of the shepherd and the clown, in the second scene of the Fifth Act, over their elevation to the Sicilian peerage, should have answered the question for all time.

Shakespeare not of aristocratic sympathies.

The author now draws away the young people of the company, to close the situation, that he may exhibit the grace of Perdita, dancing with the court-trained Florizel, in contrast with the rustic movements of the rest. Autolycus comes in singing, and exposing the flashy contents of his pack, and the farm girls are all agog over his gewgaws. Perdita keeps aloof, not because she is wearing more substantial finery, but for the reason that the amenities and satisfactions of her living belong to a different plane. She has been brought up with gross-mouthed kitchen wenches, yet the pedler is forewarned to sing no scurrilous ballads in her hearing. Then comes the moment when the plot must turn, and bear Perdita away from the sphere where she has shown her strength so well. In Polyxenes the author has the forces ready. The King has been made weak enough to lose his temper over the proposed precontract, and fling out, leaving nothing but commands between the

Perdita not intimidated by the King.

lovers and their will. Perdita is also to be tried by his threats to efface her beauty and put her to death by torture. She realises the position, in relation to the kingdom and the succession, into which she has been unwittingly drawn. But she will not be intimidated by a king who will so abuse his power. The charge that she has bewitched the prince, knowing fully who he was, she (ll. 451–456) ignores completely.

> Even *here* undone.
> I was not *much* afeared. For once or twice
> I was about to speak and tell him plainly
> The selfsame sun that shines upon his court
> Hides not his visage from our cottage, but
> Looks on all alike.

She looks timidly at Florizel, who seemingly in hesitation for the moment makes no effort to reassure her, and begs him to be gone. There are no words of reproach for the disappointment he has caused; he must take care of his prospects at any cost to her. Her shepherd father denounces her, echoing the King's charges, as the author of the doom he must quickly meet. But she shows no indignation or impatience, or indeed sorrow; for she seems to have faith, like her mother's, that injustice cannot prevail. When no course is open but flight with her lover, which Camillo's disloyalty to his friend makes practicable, she does not hesitate from fear of Florizel's future or her own. She seems governed, for her part, by some indeterminate consciousness of her right to be a queen. And her lover's caprice of having her decked out in the robes of a court lady prepares

her for fitting entry to her father's presence and admiration.

Perdita's kneeling to her mother.

The part of Perdita as a second heroine is finished here. When Hermione is given back to us, there must be no rivalry, not even the most distant, for our attention. We could have guessed, however, that Shakespeare would not fail to bring the mother and her long-lost daughter together, before us, in some artistic situation that would be exalting to them both. It is an entrancing moment when this country-bred maiden, who has never seen art collections before, or shared the company of great lords and ladies, kneels before Hermione in Paulina's resplendent chapel. What influences draw her to this homage the author does not reveal. But he has made us sure that she could not have rendered such tribute to a painted statue, and that she could not have withheld it in the real presence of the Queen who had borne the burdens of calumny, imprisonment, and seclusion so grandly for her sake.

But we cannot pretend to canvass the essential meanings of *The Winter's Tale*. We have gone far enough to descry its art, and to identify of what sort were the forces in the mind that wrought it. A proper realisation of its art expedients and elements and its deeper lessons must be left to the aspiring reader to accomplish for himself. As has been observed, it is peculiarly his right, in the search for such knowledge and mastery, to be left alone. The Outlines in the Appendix seem all that may be offered, without impertinence, for his aid.

# IV

## ROMEO AND JULIET

It has long been recognised that a man's spiritual stature is registered in his fellowship with the True, and in his reverence for the noblest examples of his mother's sex. We have seen what Shakespeare was in these respects when he had reached the age of forty-five years and upwards. We are anxious to know of what sort he was when he began his literary and dramatic career, and how far he was then capable of controlling his reader's sympathies by literary art. We unfortunately lack evidence of the kind required touching an age so early. The first play that may be profitably examined is the *Romeo and Juliet*, which is believed to have been completed considerably before his thirtieth year.

What Shakespeare was in younger authorship.

Shakespeare borrowed the characters and outline of this tragedy, as is well known, from Brooke's *Romeus and Juliet;* but his indebtedness to this and its originals is much less than is usually supposed. Brooke's narrative, read in the light of Shakespeare's product, is raw and colourless, with little characterisation, and almost no genuine interpretation of life. It is one thing to take an incident from bare annals, and expand it, in

Shakespeare's debt to Brooke.

flowing Alexandrines, into literary language. It is a very different thing to supply omitted elements, distribute and differentiate the characters, and inaugurate the whole as an integral exhibit of pulsing, energised humanity. The man who supplies the life could probably have devised the incidents, the plot, had he so willed; for the greater in these matters certainly includes the less. Moreover, Brooke seems to have had small acquaintance with the people among whom his tale is laid; he is blunderingly innocent of the customs, folk-characteristics, the exquisite susceptibilities, the enthusiasms, and the dreamy fervour which are of the essence of the history he has to tell. Shakespeare lavishes strange lore of this sort, we know not whence, on all his Italian plays, conspicuously *Othello* and *The Merchant of Venice*, besides the present one, and everywhere exalts the idealism and refinement of that race, with its arts and accomplishments of social culture, as the noblest and fullest yet attained. It was materials and elements of this kind, which, added to Brooke, have made the *Romeo and Juliet* possible.

The artistic purpose of the street fray.

Our purpose will not permit us to follow the play further than the portraiture of Juliet, as reached at the plighting of her troth to Romeo. The piece opens with a brutal sword fight between the *bravi*, or hired ruffians, of the rival houses of Capulet and Montague. Shakespeare's audiences were without knowledge of the truculence and persistency of old-time Italian feuds, or of the social and municipal conditions that made

them possible. So he details the steps by which one of the inevitable combats is evolved. The street is roused, citizens turn out at a moment's warning, with clubs, to despatch the fighters, and the Prince, perhaps not unexpectant of such trouble, is quickly upon the scene. All this is illuminating as to the state of affairs in Verona, and in special as to the rankling and truceless enmity that divides the households of the title characters, and their respective social followings.

Benvolio, Romeo's friend, is on hand to help part the swordsmen. Tybalt, Juliet's cousin, is of no such temper, and improves the opportunity to have at one of the opposing faction. Romeo might have been in the fray, had he been given to knight-errantry of Tybalt's sort. But he has no wish to fight for fighting's sake, being of gentler instincts and perhaps finer breeding. For the Montagues seem such mental stuff as a Renaissance is made of, while the stock of the Capulets is of a somewhat harsher fibre. At any rate, Romeo is of the choicest blood of Italy, and gives his days and nights to tastes and associates that even Capulet gossip cannot condemn. But he has of late shunned his friends, penned himself up from daylight, and justified the suspicion that he may be ailing in his wits. His malady is, however, nothing but what is incident to spirits as rare as his, and shows itself at worst but in vigils and sonnet-making; for in his brain Italian longings have begun to stir. A beautiful virgin spirit, worshipful of womanhood, he has loitered along the paths of fancy, in love with the possibili-

Romeo in love with his ideals of love.

ties of love rather than with any concrete and true evincement of its power. He has seen Rosaline, and read his ideals into her face and mind. But they are not there, or he would pursue her, and woo her, and essay to melt her indifference after a more typic Italian fashion.

A victim of ennui, unconsciously waiting for the fulfilment of conditions under which his passion shall blaze out, Romeo happens upon his opportunity. Capulet, a hale and fascinating gentleman, whose rich ancestors have made life for him an unbroken leisure, sends out a servant with invitations. He has neglected to select one who can read the names; and Romeo chances to be the first pedestrian of that probable accomplishment that is encountered upon the way. Had Romeo not been considerate and kindly, the true gentleman that we know, the events of the play might have been much hindered; he would have answered the fellow with Tybalt snappishness, and sent him farther. Romeo treats him civilly, reads his list for him, and gains knowledge of the gathering at Capulet's house, where, if he is minded to use the liberty of a mask, he may look once more on Rosaline.

Lady Capulet in some awe of her daughter.

The next scene paints for us the first picture of Juliet. Her mother is a woman of half her husband's years, shallow, conventional, spiritually undeveloped. She does not seem to know very well this daughter whom she has let the nurse bring up in her household, and manifestly stands somewhat in awe of her sober, demure, and steadfast disposition. Paris has proposed himself

as a suitor. Juliet must be told; and the mother approaches the task of conferring with her fourteen-year old daughter upon the topic of the affections with something like embarrassment. Brooke makes Juliet's age to have been sixteen; Paynter's version of the same story, which Shakespeare must have seen, presents her as two years older. Shakespeare corrects both the one and the other English, or Northern, numeral, according to physiological verities, by substituting the proper Italian one. The heroine at least shall be fancy free, and unwakened yet to the significance of love.

The art of portraying character consists mainly in making the given subject do or say such things as are potential and illuminating concerning the complete and habitual personality. Thus, Tybalt's thrust at Benvolio, in the first scene, makes us understand that ruffian thoroughly for the residue of the play. It is possible to select vitally symptomatic things, which shall put the reader into potential acquaintanceship with the past and the future of the character considered. Lady Capulet is not made here to seek her daughter out, to talk love-matters, in the confidences of a mother's closet; though an Hermione would have communed with a Perdita in that way. This woman sends the nurse to call her daughter to her.

The art of character drawing.

The nurse, again, is characterised to us vividly by the words which make up the first line she utters. It besides reveals to us in a flash that she is an Italian, and not an English serving-woman. Called into the

home as nurse for the nonce of this Juliet, she has stayed on, filling the mother's place, and administering moral nurture. Shakespeare needs to make us know, at the outset, among what influences and surroundings this flower of purity has grown.

Juliet's strength of character.

Juliet, in turn, is made to answer what shall be imaginatively suggestive of her nature: 'Madam, I am here. What is your will?' No great fondness or sympathy exists between mother and daughter, and it is not the daughter's fault. There is quantitatively more character already, in the daughter, more seriousness and strength, than in the make-up of the mother. Lady Capulet sends the nurse away, but, quickly realising that the conversation will be strained, calls her back to help fill up the silences. The nurse, for her part, discloses immediately, by her appropriation of the conversation, and spinning out unimportant details, in Dame Quickly fashion, how she has magnified her offices and enlarged her sphere. Some characterisation of Juliet is accomplished also through the nurse's talk. By the accident of her reference to Juliet's maturity, Lady Capulet finds her clue. 'Tell me, daughter Juliet, how stands your disposition to be married?' Juliet's reply, as we might have guessed, indicates a mind not yet confident or conscious of charms, not like Romeo's in love with love, withal self-poised, replete with the seriousnesses of living that come, all the world over, to demure maiden minds. There is, besides, we may suspect, something of the reticence or indeed unfrankness that, in matters of the affections,

seems to thrive equally under Southern as under Northern suns.

Naturally enough, the nurse, with her doubtful domestic history, applauds Juliet's notion of the 'honour' of being married. The attempt of the mother to recommend to her daughter the idea, on general grounds, of having a husband, is pitiable. It is certain that Juliet has given her thus far no anxiety about lovers. And then her absurd praise of Paris, —

> Verona's summer hath not such a flower, —

is of a kind that neither Paris nor any sort of virile wooer would have held it flattery to hear, and is scarcely matronly or motherly. Juliet remains silent while her mother and the nurse try to coax her into some degree of recognition of Paris's eligibility. Her impressions of Paris are no doubt definite enough, and it is perhaps not easy to say, as she does say in effect, that she will give him the best chance she can. Of one thing she is sure, — she will in no wise allow herself to be attracted further, after the manner of inconsiderate and undutiful daughters, than her mother vouchsafes consent. Juliet thinks this altogether a safe promise, supposing Paris alone in question. But she will break it beautifully all the same, and with about as much regret and recklessness as if to elude a mother's vigilance were her chief employment. There is no truer maid in Italy, though she is not an Imogen. And yet, after Cymbeline yielded to the new Queen's will, did not Imogen deceive?

Romeo and Benvolio, this time with several of their friends, flanked by torch-bearers and pages, appear again in the following or fourth scene. We wonder at the length of the dialogue, which seems at first but to delay the action. We then note that in the stage direction, *Enter Romeo, Mercutio, and Benvolio,* there is a nearer friend at Romeo's side. The point of it all, or at least the main one, is the brilliant and voluble conversation of Mercutio. Our hero has seemed unresponsive, heavy, untypical. Mercutio makes good what we miss in him, and fascinates us by his imagination.

The need of a Mercutio.

The little group of young Italian gentlemen sets out, to the strokes of the drum, for the palace of Juliet's father. No such bright and fashionable company, we may be sure, is abroad to-night on Verona streets. We are taken in advance of their arrival, by the opening of scene v, to the house of the Capulets. The servants hurry about, and the musicians are in waiting, in the great hall. This introduction to the home, while the host delays, will enable us to give our attention wholly to the guests, when they shall appear. Capulet soon brusquely enters, with Juliet as acting hostess, and puts the company at once in perfect humour. His Italian volubility, and gestures, and repetitions, —

'Tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis gone, —

individualise him vividly.

Romeo has seen Juliet, and her staid brow and subdued enjoyment of the scene are fascinating to his

melancholic mood. She is beautiful, and she is grave; the high seriousness and imaginative refinement of her nature are rarely blended. Here is his affinity, his ideal; his affection changes from an inner vision to a concrete, evinced reality. In the flickering, inconstant light of the torches he traces out each feature, and finds the divine idea of beauty on which she is planned complete. She is dancing with some swain, — not Paris, who is not mentioned, and seems to have kept bashfully aloof, and Romeo waits till the measure shall be finished. He has sought no partner, and, being a torch-holder, is in proximity to no one who might tell him who she is. The serving-man, of whom he makes inquiry, naturally does not know of whose family she is; and Romeo gives way to his interpretative and realising thoughts: —

> O, *she* doth teach the *torches* to burn bright!
> Her beauty hangs upon the cheek of night
> Like a rich jewel in an Ethiope's ear;
> Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!
> So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows,
> As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.
> The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand,
> And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.
> Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight!
> For I ne'er saw beauty till this night.

His domino conceals his face; but his voice, which is deep and musical, and his figure, mark him to Tybalt as of the Montagues. The old hate blazes out. Tybalt would have set upon him, and despatched him then and there, defenceless and unsuspecting, but for the veto of his uncle. Thus the motive for

Tybalt's later challenge to Romeo, and for the insult that Mercutio will decline to tolerate, is introduced.

While Capulet quiets Tybalt, with difficulty keeping his own rage from blazing out in the face of his guests, the music has stopped, and Romeo, giving up his torch, bends his steps through the press to Juliet's side. He is of fine presence and stature, gracefully proportioned, and the deep seriousness of his brow tells of high thoughts and infinite devotion. Juliet reads him instantly, and gains the vision of his ideals and worth. Here is the knight who, to her, is tender and strong, and pure and true. It makes little difference what such souls who have seen each other say. Words are hieroglyphics that the vulgar, who overhear, cannot divine. Romeo takes her by the hand. All his dreaminess, and far-off, impracticable worship are gone from his mind. He is at his best of cleverness and grace: —

> If I profane with my unworthiest hand
> This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this:
> My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand
> To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.
>
> Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,
> Which mannerly devotion shows in this;
> For *saints* have *hands* that pilgrim's hands do touch,
> And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.
>
> Have not saints *lips*, and holy palmers too?
>
> Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in *prayer*.
>
> O, then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do:
> *They pray*. *Grant thou*, lest faith turn to despair.
>
> Saints do not move, though *grant* for prayers' sake.

This is not very skilful, this hint that she shall make no stir, whatever happens. But Juliet is young, and innocent of all less open wiles that expert and practised charmers know. Grant White believes that Juliet here has been contriving to be drawn into a corner, that there may be no escape from Romeo's conclusion. This heavy-handed comment seems of value, but only in support of the contrary idea. White has in mind Juliets of another sort, and there are such, who would proceed, after the fashion that he affirms, in the case of any Romeo, and forget him in half an hour. It is one thing to be in love with a whole sex, but quite another to be in love with a single example of it; and Juliet is the last woman in the world to think, mischievously, of trying to make a conquest. Lady Capulet at this point calls Juliet away, and Romeo, who has not yet removed his mask, is not recognised by her. Juliet, who has not fully seen his face, has heard his voice, and will know her lover by that, though she were separated from him for half a lifetime.

Of course much in this meeting of the lovers is left to the acting. If the stage Romeo and Juliet feel and look the characters that they represent, there is not much difficulty in playing the respective parts. No exterior grace or archness will make up for the profound psychology on which Shakespeare founds both title characters. Theirs is no common physical attraction, each to other. When Juliet is released from the social task imposed by her mother, the young men have taken leave of their host and are

departing. Aided by something of the reserve apparent in the interview with her mother and the nurse, she now inquires out who is the guest that charms her. She has faith in her vision of his sincerity, and feels in her heart that he is not married. But she is of Gothic temperament, and must look on the dark side first. If it prove that he is not for her, if he have a wife already, then will love be shut out forever from her life, and life itself will not be long. Romeo and his companions have probably, on withdrawing, raised their masks, and the identity of each is known. So the nurse brings knowledge that he is not married, but that he is a Montague. The result is but a change in Juliet's seriousness.

> *My only love sprung from my only hate!*
> Too early seen unknown, and known too late!
> Prodigious birth of love it is to me,
> That I must love a loathed enemy.

Juliet has never loved before; her life, like a George Eliot's, or Maggie Tulliver's, has been too sombre and severe. That we can understand. But why has she hated? That is the Italian something that we cannot well understand. Every Capulet hates all the Montagues, with perfect Southron hatred, and each child, from inherited enmity and from nurture, hates with the full hatred of its father.

To administer the element of time, most important here, Shakespeare has the Chorus of the Earlier Drama come out and occupy the stage. The author must bring the lovers to their understanding within

the compass of a hundred and sixty lines, a feat scarcely achieved elsewhere, and must make to himself friends of all the accessories and expedients of stage tradition. To have late events rehearsed, and new ones interpreted beforehand, by a stage personification, interposes a signal experience between our first seeing the lovers and their next appearance, and psychologically retards the resumption of the plot. Shakespeare uses a similar expedient, to the same effect, when he makes Old Father Time come in, with scythe and hourglass, at the opening of Act IV in *The Winter's Tale*, and explain the omission of sixteen years. The effect is also, of course, in some measure to assist credulity.

Anglo-Saxon prejudices are apt to be stirred at the notion of love at first sight. It seems based on nothing but the most superficial attractions, and holds in itself the promise of little but disillusion and repentance. Moreover, it is a common assumption that the Italian nature is fickle and shallow, and that the loves of a Juliet and Romeo, if uninterrupted, could have proved but fleeting, and owe their intensity to nothing but the suddenness of passion. There is probably no remedy for such ignorance and race conceit but travel and sojourn among the misjudged people. It does not help much to affirm abstractly that the Italian is at his best not an inconstant creature, falling in love, — as we are reminded Romeo did, — with every pretty face, but quite the contrary. Love is founded upon imaginative recognition and conception of high quali-

The Italians not a fickle, inconstant race.

ties of worth and nobleness. It is not essential that a Romeo's eye dwell upon the signs of such nobleness and worth continuously, for weeks and months, before discerning what they stand for, and responding to their challenge. Such might be the course of love, were the signs doubtful, or the beauty and worth that they stand for partial, alloyed with baser elements. But to Romeo the soul of Juliet lies open at first view. Her clear seeing of spiritual verities, and consequent earnestness and frank sincerity, her wifely solicitudes and sweet devotion, her purity and self-subordination, are open secrets, and would have been as patent, and perhaps as potent, had they been looked on by Anglo-Saxon eyes. Typically the Italian Romeo is more acute and intense of vision than his Northern brother; and there are in his Juliet's eyes messages more soulful and transparent than can be read by the light of colder suns. While human nature is human nature everywhere in kind, there are beautiful and wonderful differences of degree. On the basis of these the author has constructed the present play.

Till the sight of Juliet, Romeo spent his days in sighing, and his nights in feverish and empty vigil. Rosaline was a symbol of his ideal toward which he was drawn to no personal approach. From Juliet he finds it impossible to go away. His group of maskers has reduced itself, before reaching the lane or alley beside the great Capulet enclosure, to Mercutio and Benvolio; and from these advancing with the torch-bearers, whom he has now sent forward, he

slips aside into the alley. Before his friends have fairly missed him from sight, he has climbed the wall and leaped within. In the first situation, our hero was subordinated to Benvolio, who discoursed with concern of his late behaviour. On the advent of Mercutio, Romeo seemed infelicitous and heavy in comparison. But now, as the one and the other call after Romeo vainly in the dark, we find our interest and sympathies transferred. Benvolio is staunch, well-meaning, clean of lips and life, altogether such a companion as a Romeo would attract and attach in friendship to himself. Mercutio is livelier, but less substantial, and perhaps of less prestige socially, and seems rather to have selected himself than to have been selected, in Romeo's following. When he hits off Romeo's boyish devotion to Rosaline so cleverly, we of course applaud: —

> Romeo! humours! madman! passion! lover!
> Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh!
> Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied.
> Cry but 'Ay me!' Pronounce but 'love' and 'dove';
> Speak to my gossip Venus one fair word,
> One nickname for her purblind son and heir,
> Young Abraham Cupid, he that shot so trim,
> When King Cophetua lov'd the beggar maid. —
> He heareth not, he stirreth not, he moveth not.
> The ape is dead, and I must conjure him.

Yet the deliverance reacts in Romeo's favour. Mercutio, we admit, is clever; but he is not lofty-minded. He has seen the world, and affects to despise such an attachment as Romeo, he believes, is forming. We

prefer Romeo's virile innocence to all Mercutio's wayward wisdom. The young man who will speak of his friend's inamorata lightly, with insult to her womanhood, has lost the token of true manliness.[1] We shall find the equilibrium between him and Romeo still more completely shifted, and of purpose, as the play proceeds.

As his friends withdraw, Romeo looks at the windows along the side of the palace, hoping to divine what ones are Juliet's. At the instant she has entered her chamber, and is lighting the tapers, which reveal her outline, and shining out to him draw his steps toward her. Immediately his romantic imagination is kindled to its best strength of interpretative vision. What he utters is hardly in the dialect of an English lover, but may be taken as indicative of the Italian energy and activity of his mind. Juliet has just come from the dismissing of the guests below, with the identity of Romeo still in her mind. Advancing from the yet uncooled air of the chamber to the open window, she gives way to the sigh, till now suppressed, 'that her only love should have sprung from her only hate.' But the tones of Romeo's voice yet ring in her mind, and have made her suspect it possible to hate unjustly. Romeo of course cannot guess what is in her thoughts, but his fancy gets new quickening, as is seen in the images that now shape themselves to his lips: —

[1] In studies of Shakespeare's art, only complete and unexpurgated texts should be used. Points like the present one will otherwise be missed.

O speak again, bright angel! For thou art
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,
As is a winged messenger of heaven
Unto the white-upturned wondering eyes
Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him,
When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

There is a little silence, and then is heard, as said musingly, and in confidence to herself: —

O *Romeo, Romeo, wherefore* art *thou Romeo?*
Deny thy father, and refuse thy name;
*Or*, if thou *wilt* not, be but sworn my love,
And *I'll* no longer be a Capulet.

Juliet is dropping the plummet deep down in her soul, and is finding strange soundings there. She feels that she can give up her dear home, with all its elegance and happy memories, she can go away from her father and her friends, and even renounce the proud name of Capulet, all because of an uncontrollable passion to yield and merge herself in sacrifice and devotion to this prince, this deity who has so suddenly revealed himself to her. The Juliet of a higher latitude makes these discoveries more slowly, and feels it well to enter into contention, get comfort from the losing battle against their power. Juliet discerns the will of nature, and allies herself with it sweetly. But Romeo, — what can Romeo know of the forces that have wrought the change? Will he believe indeed that there has been a change? Will he think her shallow, conceive her capable of throwing herself into the arms of any other man who might address her amorously? He has read her

eyes, the deep meanings of her mind, too well for that. He would have wooed her timorously and long; but now what shall he do? Juliet's self-probing and philosophising save him a decision: —

> 'Tis but thy *name* that is my enemy.
> Thou art *thyself*, though *not* a Montague.
> What's *Montague?* It is nor hand nor foot
> Nor *arm* nor *face* nor any *other* part
> Belonging to a man. *O, be* some *other name!*
> *What's* in a *name?* That which we call a *rose*
> By *any other name* would *smell* as *sweet.*
> So *Romeo* would, were he *not* Romeo call'd,
> *Retain* that *dear perfection* which he *owes*
> Without that title. — Romeo, *doff* thy name,
> And *for* that name, which is *no part* of thee,
> *Take all myself.*

Juliet, let us remember, is not pondering why she should wish to give up her maiden freedom, and belong to another more than to herself, but how it should be possible for her to resign herself to one of the hated house of Montague. Romeo is long past any trouble of that kind, for he is a man, and can but vaguely guess, in this moment of intoxication, how tenaciously Juliet's feminine conversatism holds her to the past. But he will indeed deny his father, and refuse his name.

> I take thee at thy word.
> Call me but *love*, and I'll be new baptiz'd.
> Henceforth I never will be Romeo.
> . . . . By a *name*
> I know not how to tell thee who I am.
> My name, dear saint, is hateful to *myself,*
> Because it is an enemy to *thee.*
> Had I it written, I would *tear* the word.

The victory was really won before Romeo spoke. Juliet is too practical to think of Romeo's involving himself in any trouble with his family on her account. She wishes to make all the renunciation, and is beginning to find it a joy to speak the once hated names: —

Art thou not *Romeo*, and a *Montague?*

Romeo is filled with romantic ideals, and is governed by them. Juliet has seen this, and loves him for it. Juliet's fancies do not fly so high, as she is of a matter-of-fact temper and constitution; and Romeo loves her because her nature is complemental to his own. The real and the ideal are seen strangely in dialogue, as the twain now talk. Juliet asks in fond and wondering anxiousness, but Romeo answers valiantly, in the language of the clouds. All her utterances are wholly feminine in emphasis and diction, while his are as truly masculine. She inquires first *how* he came, and will he tell really *why?*

*How* cam'st thou thither, *tell* me? and *wherefore?*
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,
And the place death, considering who thou art,
If any of my kinsmen *find* thee here.

With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls,
For stony limits cannot hold love out,
And what love can do that dares love attempt.
Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me.

If they do *see* thee, they will *murther thee.*

Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye
Than twenty of their swords. Look thou but sweet,
And I am proof against their enmity.

I would not *for the world* they *saw* thee here.

I have night's cloak to hide me from their eyes.
And but thou love me, let them find me here.
My life were better ended by their hate,
Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.

Attention has many times been called to the puns and other marks of immaturity in this play. But there are no puns or rhymings here. Was ever English used to more telling purpose?

By whose *direction* found'st thou out this place?

By love, that first did prompt me to inquire.
He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.
I am no pilot. Yet wert thou as far
As that vast shore wash'd with the farthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandise.

While they have been talking in these strange interchanges of realism and romance, Juliet's intuitions have been active with the practical aspects of the case. Romeo would have kept voicing his airy nothings till daylight, with never a thought of the loss of time. If they are to belong to each other, there must be a plan. As Romeo seems in supreme content with things as they are, she must act for both. Since she has indicated objections to his family, while he has waived all unpleasant recollections of hers, it behooves her to show her generosity without delay. Then, too, she must excuse what Romeo has overheard, whether she make it worse or better. He will understand her like a god, and it will be sweet to confess herself to one who is so loftily in love.

Juliet plans for both.

Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.
Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny
What I have spoke; but farewell compliment!
*Dost thou love me?* I know thou wilt *say* ay, —
*And I will take thy word.* Yet, if thou *swear'st,*
Thou mayst prove false. At lovers' perjuries,
They say, Jove laughs. *O gentle Romeo,*
*If* thou dost love, pronounce it *faithfully;*
*Or,* if thou *think'st I* am *too quickly* won,
I'll frown, and be perverse, and say thee nay,
So thou wilt woo; but *else,* not for the *world.*

Her dismay and pleading, when she realises again how much of her maidenly secret she has betrayed, are Imogen-like and rarely beautiful: —

In truth, fair Montague, I *am* too fond,
And therefore thou mayst think my haviour light.
But *trust* me, *gentleman,* I'll *prove* more *true*
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.

Romeo, by instinct, applies to her an equally formal designation, answering to her "gentleman," —

*Lady,* by yonder blessed moon I swear.

He would assure her of the utter fascination of her frankness, and of the eternal fidelity of his soul to a faith so childlike and complete. But she stops the words that she would joy much to hear, because they are gratuitous and spring from too much concern. She would have Romeo as reposeful as herself: — The power of Juliet's faith.

O swear not by the moon, th' inconstant moon,
That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

> What shall I swear by?
>
> Do not swear at all;
> Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,
> Which is the god of my idolatry,
> And I'll believe thee.

Such trust would lay hold on all that is sacred in manhood, and make an unworthy Romeo true. It is not a wilful, reckless venture, but her tribute to the nobleness of his mind.

How Shakespeare alleviates the haste.

To Anglo-Saxon prudence the scene has seemed precipitate. Shakespeare must conciliate his reader and remedy somewhat the haste. His best device will be to produce some impression again of prolonged time, as by multiplying the reader's experiences between what may be called stages in the relations of the lovers. Juliet's sense of the suddenness of their attachment is first used. She thinks to withdraw, though no line of action that shall bring them again together seems yet developed before her mind.

> Well, do not swear. Although I joy in thee,
> I have no joy of this contract to-night.
> It is too *rash*, too *unadvis'd*, too *sudden*,
> Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
> Ere one can *say* it lightens. Sweet, *good* night!
> This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
> May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.
> Good *night*, *good night!* *As* sweet *repose* and *rest*
> Come to *thy* heart as that within *my* breast!

I suspect our sympathies are with Romeo, who feels the incompleteness of the interview that he has so little helped to shape. He would like assurance

that a formal betrothment has been made before he goes away. In Juliet's feeling that has been done already. It is such a little thing, she must have him know, compared with the fathomless bounty that she would have all his.

> O, wilt thou leave me *so* unsatisfied?
>
> What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?
>
> The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.
>
> I gave thee *mine* before thou didst *request* it,
> And yet I would it were to give again.
>
> Wouldst thou *withdraw* it? For what purpose, love?
>
> But to be *frank*, and *give* it *thee again*.
> And *yet* I wish but for the *thing* I *have*.
> My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
> My love as deep: the *more* I give to *thee*
> The more *I* have, for both are infinite.
> I hear some noise within. *Dear* love, adieu! —
> Anon, good nurse! — *Sweet* Montague, be true.
> *Stay* but a little, I will come again.

To her the name of Montague, as she turns from him, is no longer 'fair', as it had grown to be a few lines back; it is even 'sweet.' The effect of the repeated good-nights and adieus is beginning to seem like the registry of a much longer wooing. The call of the nurse is but another expedient to give perspective to their acquaintanceship. When Juliet returns, her mind is cleared, the vision of their future has been made out. They must not risk another interview; the least suspicion of their relations would imprison them from each other's sight

Juliet's plan.

forever. They will wed secretly, and leave Verona, Romeo shall say whither: —

> Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.
> If that thy bent of love be honourable,
> Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow,
> By one that I'll procure to come to thee,
> Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite;
> And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay,
> And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

All the anxiety that should have been her mother's comes to her. If the price is too great, if Romeo will not make the sacrifice, let him advise her speedily. The nurse is made to call again, and urgently, and Romeo withdraws. Juliet has left nothing for him to do but make up his mind. Like Imogen's insistency with Pisanio, after Posthumus's letter calling her to Milford Haven, her woman's resolution carries all before it.

But Imogen left out nothing from her plans; the author makes Juliet forget to arrange with Romeo the hour. This is added to give them, in seeming, another interview. And of course, in the dramatic action, and the fresh glimpse of Juliet's mind, there is great gain besides to the scene. The philosophy of her thought, —

> Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud;
> Else would I tear the cave where Echo lies,
> And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine,
> With repetition of my Romeo's name, —

is un-Anglican, yet wholly such as Desdemona and many another of Shakespeare's Italian women might

compass by the way. It is well to be reminded of the strength and momentum of her intelligence. She sends her voice out hissingly after Romeo, who has fortunately retired but slowly. He presents himself beneath her, and she speaks down to him in a fresh, new, soulful salutation, 'Romeo,' that he cannot comprehend as we do. That is now the name of names that she would not have him refuse. The scene apparently finds here its climax. She does not ask him if he has bethought himself; the old faith has really never wavered.

> At what *o'clock* to-morrow
> Shall I *send* to thee ?

The question asked, and answered, Juliet lingers, finding no reason why; the moment has come when the woman in her ordains that she withdraw: —

> 'Tis almost morning. I would have thee gone,
> And yet no farther than a wanton's bird,
> Who lets it hop a little from her hand,
> Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,
> And with a silk thread plucks it back again,
> So loving-jealous of his liberty.
>
> I would I *were* thy bird.
> Sweet, so would *I*.
> Yet I should *kill* thee with much *cherishing*.
> Good night, *good night!* Parting is such sweet sorrow,
> That I shall say good night till it be morrow.

The same objectiveness is delectably present again, in the mode and substance of these rare lines. It seems clear what kind of imagination Shakespeare postulates for his best womanhood. He would have

feminine vision, or intuition, that gift by which woman is chiefly separate from man, natively employed in processes that make for his exaltation and advance, and not in unapplied, untethered exercise. Shakespeare knows the other type of female imagination, of which he has made stern studies in Lady Macbeth and Cleopatra. The George Sands and George Eliots have not greatly advanced the race, and, as personal factors and figures, stand apart from their sex at large. Woman is to Shakespeare's thought the interpreter of the gods in things touching the Good and the True and their increase upon the earth. Why are purity and worth the basis of man's love for woman? Because coming generations are to be born thus by consecutive, progressive selection of the Beautiful and the True, which are but manifestations and modes of God. So the race evolves toward these excellencies, and is compassing them as rapidly at this moment, in degree, as ever in its history. The Kingdom of God comes not except by influence. Rightness and Beauty cannot strive or cry; they must be sought and chosen for their own sake. The man who discerns, and sells all that he has that he may buy, achieves them within his own existence. By the economy of the spiritual universe, each grandly noble and righteous deed goes to the credit side of every indorsing and coveting soul's account. Shakespeare has made in Romeo simply a man who discerns completely, — as Posthumus did not, and buys the pearl of price with all his treasure. Juliet

The intuition of Shakespeare's women.

is but an Imogen nature more richly glorious and alert with Beauty.

The *Romeo and Juliet* is then but another *Cymbeline*. Without Juliet it could not have been conceived; and the Juliet in it is not the Juliet of Brooke or of Bandello. Shakespeare is the same man, in respect of spiritual ideals and aims, at twenty-eight as at forty-six, except that he is more insistent and intense. Why should he have attempted such a portraiture as this Juliet, when his fame and success were yet a-making? Expanding and realizing Brooke's poem did not require it. Granting that Shakespeare discerned the character, just as we have found it developed to us, how shall we explain his venturing with it before the coarse audiences of The Theatre or The Curtain? We know what the behaviour of salacious and brutal men is in playhouses even yet, over tender situations, when they are in force and dare to groan or jeer. Plays were not seldom interrupted in Shakespeare's day, even by high-bred patrons, and the impersonators mocked and badgered. How then could Shakespeare have risked, before a sixteenth-century rabble of horse-boys and watermen and their sort, with a sprinkling of gallants and masked women, to present Juliet in the orchard scene of the Third Act, waiting for her Romeo? Yet we have no reason to suspect that the part was ever greeted with so much as a whisper of ribaldry, though the Juliet who paced the orchard walks and said the lines, was not a woman, but a boy.

The power of Juliet over Shakespeare's audiences.

There is nothing more inspired in Shakespeare or the world's literature, and nothing more delicate in its sympathy with woman, — save perhaps, in some portions, the treatment of Viola in *Twelfth Night*, — than the first paragraph of the scene in question. Shakespeare's patrons would have at that time liked from him such plays as Beaumont and Fletcher, and Ford, and Massinger later wrote, but no such works did they get. Shakespeare alone of all the craft grew rich. He could not have known beforehand the result of refusing to cater to the public taste. There is no reasonable conclusion, save that he pleased first and chiefly of all himself, and wrote, even when bidden by Elizabeth, by truth.

As was said earlier, the basis of the play is certain exotic and southern excellencies of character, exhibited and evaluated in degree. Our manner of analysis has had reference mainly to distinctions of kind. To have considered it with full reference to its distinctions of degree would have involved more technical and abstruse inquiries. The outline analyses, in the Appendix to this volume, should clear up matters left doubtful here, and enable an approximate comprehension of the whole play. In art, or expedients for the control of the reader's consents and sympathies, the piece is masterly. Prominent among new phases, achieved after the scene where we parted with the lovers, are the full womanising of Juliet, the evolving of her feigned consent to marry Paris, the drinking of the potion, the awakening of Romeo, and the compelling, resistless management of the conclusion.

Perhaps no single procedure is more palpable, or striking, than the appropriation and merging of Mercutio, after his work is done, into the personality of the hero that he has been formed to serve. The subordination of Mercutio commences, as has been noted, at the opening of the Second Act. Shakespeare completes it by causing him to suspect Romeo of having begun an amour or intrigue, and by making him offer a scurrilous insult to Juliet's messenger, in the fourth scene following. Romeo has become at this interview, in consequence of his relation with Juliet, wholly sane and normalised, and proves himself no less than a match, in wit-passages, for his late overshadowing friend. This finishes the second stage of change. Then, after Mercutio's quarrel and fight with Tybalt, which Romeo quells, all his assets of gifts and brilliancy seem assumed and absorbed by the hero. Benvolio drops out of sight and is forgotten. Romeo is now the man of the play. He kills Tybalt, whose chief accomplishment is swordsmanship, almost at the first pass. He is grand and perfect in his daring, and strength, and resolution. He is aroused, though he is not yet awake. Of course the author's device is simple; it is Romeo's sacrifice to avenge his friend that exalts him, and makes him that friend's spiritual heir. But the skill of this turn, which is not in Brooke, is worthy of all praise.

Mercutio's gifts and accomplishments made over to Romeo.

The deeper meanings of the play can be but touched on here. The conditions under which they are de-

veloped are idealized somewhat in the young man's way. Shakespeare knew no science, as we have come to know it in these days, but seems to have divined pretty clearly many of its conclusions. The groundwork of society, as he sees it, is wholly in accord with principles of sociology and biology recognised to-day. In this drama, as just said, he postulates the complete conditions that nature would have always precedent to her work. In Posthumus there is too little discernment and appreciation of Imogen's worth to inspire him to his full share in the work of the world. Romeo is a man who can read a perfect woman, and place himself in complete subservience to her leading and inspiration. Nature guards woman with all her resources, and places her chief in the social economy; man is but secondary. Nature puts within her instincts that shape her course; man's is shaped by hers. Upon fundamental thinking of this kind Shakespeare works out the play. Juliet is shown at first as merely a girl-woman, hid in the life of the home, having no secrets from her mother and her nurse, and wholly free from the interference of sex-forces. Under our eye, she is brought into acquaintance with the divinely appointed complement of her life. The first demand is that she break with the traditions of her past. This demand she meets. The woman-instincts in her at once assert themselves. She, and not her lover, plans their union and their future. Cut off by fate from present flight with Romeo, she is confronted with the marriage to Paris, for some time in prospect, but

The deeper meaning of the play.

precipitated now to temper the grief caused by her cousin's death. She tries to confess to her father, but his Italian violence makes that impossible. To prevent with us the notion of retreat the author has taken care to make her by Romeo's visit irrevocably a wife. The nurse that Shakespeare has provided in part to keep her counsel, and help hide from her parents that she already has a husband, unblushingly advises that she wed Paris and end her troubles. Astounded at the immorality of the guide whose steps she has followed hitherto, Juliet takes upon herself all her burdens, and sets forth to walk alone. By the defection of the nurse, whom he has provided to this end, Shakespeare consummates the womanising of his heroine. No course is left but one of indirections commended and urged by her confessor. She is to feign consent to the marriage, and by a sleeping potion remove herself from her father's power, and prepare for the belated flight with Romeo, who till then shall know nothing of her trials. The strength of the ancient Capulets comes to her. She goes to death, or indeed experiences dreaded worse than death, to save Romeo his rights in her.

Juliet, in effect, accepts death for Romeo's honour.

Such beautiful devotion should have been rewarded; it is tragedy unspeakable that all this endeavour should come to nought. There is no default on Juliet's side. As she awakes, and finds the terrors of the place forestalled by Friar Laurence's torch, the heaven of the future seems to open. The two lives, completed so sublimely each by each,

should have grown to be the envy of the gods, and left their spiritual increase to the generations. But all this was not to be, for in her bosom Romeo lies dead. There is no swoon, no outcry, no asking for the reasons. The Anglo-Saxon woman would have left it all with God. Juliet has done that long since, and dies rather than patch a life that has lost its goal and warrant of devotion. Romeo, who has spoiled all, knows nothing of true service, and has lived but for himself. It is not his fault, for it is his nature, and it is thus far according to the nature of his sex. He has looked for nothing but happiness, which seems his right. Denied it, he is done with the world, and recognises no debt to it or to mankind. When his dream is broken by the report of Juliet's death, asking no questions as to the manner of her dying, pausing not to learn from Friar Laurence her last words to him, he hurries with Southern passion to claim his place in Capulet's monument, and for no good except his own. His faith, like Posthumus's, has failed. He should have guessed that Juliet would not terminate her life without some word or token or remembrance for himself, and that whatever she has done, she has done it for his sake. It is right that man should be selfish, and it was appointed that he should be such, just as it was appointed that woman should be self-immolating. His selfishness makes him strong, and his strength is to be in the fulness of time for her and for the race. That fulness of time for this twain is come and past. But Romeo has for-

Man's selfishness and woman'ssacrifice, complemental modes.

gotten to be patient and act for both. Juliet has never, from the moment of loving Romeo, acted for herself, and dies deliberately, in the repose and certitude of a fulfilled career. Romeo dies in the white intensity of a passion inconceivable and incomprehensible to Northern minds. Were his mistake, like Posthumus's, not mortal, Juliet would have schooled him, as Posthumus was schooled. So must it ever be, the perfect woman subduing her lord to patience, and taming his selfishness unto the bearing of burdens, not his, not hers indeed, but God's, to the end of the discipline and perfecting of them both. Romeo and Juliet were ill-starred lovers because their trial came before her work in him was yet begun.

The art of Shakespeare in 1592 and 1610.

In point of art, it does not appear that we have in the Shakespeare of 1592 a less ingenious or less confident master than in the Shakespeare of 1610. As regards insight and knowledge he is full-grown, as touching ability to sway our sympathies and abate our prejudices he shows no sign of empiric or apprentice powers. Indeed, in conception, and proportion, and movement, *Romeo and Juliet* is superior to the plays assigned to the later year. In *Cymbeline* and *The Winter's Tale* there are limitations and defects of plot that Shakespeare handicaps himself with nowhere else. Nothing, apparently, but availability to a vital purpose, as was earlier suggested, could have prompted him to attempt the handling of such refractory and inartistic material. In the *Romeo and Juliet* we have

a good example of the kind of matter that Shakespeare habitually selects. There is nowhere a better plot or more typic tragedy. In some points of execution it falls much short of what may be found in plays composed but a few years later. There are Italianisms and puns, there is stilted declamation, there are passages cast throughout in rhyme. But these, except the first, essentially disappear after the first three scenes, and are even here, as in the paragraphs of the Prince, of Romeo, and of his father, manifestly employed in part with a characterising purpose.

In the plays thus far attempted, we have noted the author's art only incidentally, and with reference to minor expedients and aspects. In the space that remains for this part of our task, it will be necessary to consider Shakespeare as an artist more specifically in the larger problems involved in the making of a great play. Perhaps his technical mastery is in *Coriolanus* most complete in kind. His achievements in *Antony and Cleopatra* are surely the most considerable in degree. *Othello* is to be mentioned as probably the most perfect of the tragedies, and *King Lear* as the most powerful. *Twelfth Night* and *The Merchant of Venice* belong high in the list, because of excellencies more exquisite and gentle, yet no less unrivalled. All these are well adapted for our purpose, save for extent, and for the chance that they might need to be expounded throughout before they could be made to serve. *Macbeth* is a shorter play, and condensed in action, the story and

ground-work are adequate, and familiar perhaps to the majority of readers. We shall then try to look at the material of this play as Shakespeare saw it, and watch the treatment by which it was made to assume its present form.

# V

## THE DRAMATIC ART OF MACBETH

In every drama Shakespeare quickly brings before our minds a "maximum consummation," greatly to be desired, and makes us conceive and covet it as the outcome of the whole. This consummation is generally presented as early as the second situation, often in the second scene. In *Cymbeline* our desire to see Imogen restored to her husband and to her rights in the royal household, which is the dramatic consummation for that play, is shaped after the introductory dialogue in the first scene.[1] In *The Winter's Tale* our conception and desire of the conclusion come in the second scene. In *Romeo and Juliet* it is delayed until Scene iii., or if the affinity between the lovers is not divined so early, in Scene v. The arousement of interest, and of the wish for a specific outcome, is the first step in Shakespeare's dramatic, or, indeed, we should say literary, treatment of every theme.

A "maximum consummation" sighted and coveted at the beginning of every play.

It does not always happen that we realise our conceived and coveted conclusion when the play ends; and in that case we call the whole a Tragedy. In

[1] It falls in the second scene, however, in the earliest or Folio division of the play, the first scene ending at l. 69. *Romeo and Juliet* is not separated into acts or scenes in the Folio edition.

the present instance Shakespeare will have to construct a drama of this kind, if he follows history, and Macbeth will be the hero. But Macbeth is neither great, nor good, nor, indeed, much more, in point of prowess and strength, than an average swordsman. How can promise be developed in such a man, how shall we be allured into wishing to see him king of Scotland by usurpation, or coveting for him a brilliant and undisturbed career? Clearly enough, no maximum consummation of less potency will carry the piece through. But how shall the author overcome our indifference to such a hero?

The first condition of Tragedy.

It would be a pretty hard problem, if the task could be made our own, for the most of us. Our schools of literature could scarcely help. The solution of the difficulty is not to be found in rhetoric or criticism, — else Shakespeare would not have reached it, — but in psychology. Such control over the imagination of the reader must be sought for as will make him disregard Macbeth's limitations as well as Duncan's piety. Duncan, we shall probably remember, was historically a weak personage, wholly unfit, in an age of violence, for kingship. Holinshed speaks of him as "soft and gentle of nature," and "negligent in the punishment of offenders." According to the same authority, the rebel Macdonwald called him "a faint-hearted milksop, more meet to govern a sort of monks in some cloister than to have the rule of such valiant and hardy men as the Scots were." The removal of such a figure can be managed, and much more easily than the installation

Duncan an unkingly figure.

of his successor. Since Shakespeare cannot present Macbeth as one whom we shall wish to see prosper in his own worth, interest must be supplied in some way from without. The prophecy of the Weird Sisters, as told in the chronicle, suggests a plan. Properly these Sisters are not at all vulgar witches, and there is no hint in Holinshed to warrant their presence in such a rôle. Shakespeare gives them shapes and features not much better, but makes them specific servants of certain great demons, or "principalities," of the air. Witches have the power to bind demoniac agencies to their call. These Sisters are bound to the wills severally of their masters, who, according to notions not wholly exploded in Elizabethan times, have power in shaping the destinies of nations and of men. Shakespeare has but to make these masters interested in Macbeth's future, and allied in the effort to control it, and the thing is done.

The Witches' Masters.

To begin the play, it will be necessary to advise the audience or reader concerning the weak character of Duncan's kingship, and to arouse interest, if that is possible, in Macbeth as the hero. To do this with the usual dramatic condensation, it will be necessary to select some point in Macdonwald's campaign against Duncan for the moment of opening. Naturally Shakespeare chooses the battle in Lochaber, in which Macbeth put down that rebel. But Macbeth, played, according to Holinshed, no very significant part in the fighting of the day; he did not kill Macdonwald, but merely found him dead in a castle

some distance from the field. Evidently Shakespeare will have to enhance Macbeth's importance in some way, and make him essentially the chief figure. Holinshed says nothing about the Witches until after the victory; but it may be assumed that they were interfering with the natural course of things considerably before that. Shakespeare needs to have their main work, or their masters', done before the battle is concluded.

Macdonwald not killed by Macbeth.

A little scene of eleven lines furnishes a sufficient introduction. If the piece is to run under diabolic control, the supernatural element must be prominent and compelling from the first. We are not of course to see the demons; but their representatives, the Witch-sisters, must be shown to us in the first scene. Since witches shun the haunts of men, the scene will be laid in a "desert place," or upon a moor. It will not do to have clear weather. The Witches, or their masters rather, have power over the elements. So there is a sullen, depressing rain, with lightning and thunder. To mark the presence of diabolism, which never lacks the serpent's trail, this thunder-storm is accompanied with a thick, offensive fog.

Why the Witches are shown in the first scene.

The time is perhaps two o'clock, and the battle has raged since morning. The Witches, or at least two of them, have been abroad repeatedly on diabolic errands, over seas and continents perhaps, at the order of the demons. But they are so agog over the business which their masters have in hand, and which they are in part executing or to execute, that

they cannot help coming together, like children truanting, to discuss the mischief. They have already, we may suppose, met more than once since raising at daybreak the storm. They have now been together long enough to exchange reports and give some vent to their enthusiasm; they are just ready to arrange for the next rendezvous, as the lifting of the curtain discovers them to us. They agree to stay away from each other till the battle is over, and their work with Macbeth begins. They have evidently been commissioned to accost him, and speak the prophecy that shall fix his fate.

All that we need to know, besides what we see, is indicated potentially in the talk of the three Sisters. We get the suggestion, to be confirmed (*cf.* IV. i. 76) later, of a difference in the power or knowledge of their masters. The First Witch cannot tell the time or place. The Third Witch alone seems to know the future; she declares that the conflict will be over, and that they shall have met for their work "ere the set of sun." They are all manifestly aware that Macbeth is to be victorious. Who Macbeth is, to those unacquainted with Scottish history, will be made known in the next scene. That these Witches are for the moment off duty, perhaps without warrant, and are needed for industrious work in the interim, is now made apparent. The master of the First Witch calls his servitor away. That immediate service is expected seems indubitable from the answer, "I come, Graymalkin," which

The Witches differentiated in power and knowledge.

The incessant mischief of the demons.

is of the sort given to a summons when known to be an urgent one. The second demon master also demands the presence of his minister, as we understand from the words, "Paddock calls," of the Second Witch, who alone apparently hears the voice. They do not seem to wait for further summons, but rising and circling in the air together, they cry "Anon" to their masters,[1] and chant, presumably to them, a diabolic confession of faith, and a prayer, as they pass from the scene. The Third Witch seems not summoned away, like the others, to distant service, and it may be has been detailed to remain near the place of fighting, and assist the issue. She alone of the Witch Sisters makes no report, on their next coming together, of aerial voyaging and of wicked havoc wrought in other lands.

The Third Witch not summoned.

We need now to see how the demon agencies, through the Third Witch, or perhaps without her, are giving aid to Macbeth in the field. Were it dramatically wise or safe, the author would enact the struggle, and let us see the help administered, from the Witches' masters, with our own eyes. But a battle is a difficult affair to show upon the stage; and there would be risk here lest the spectacular effect of such a thing hinder in some measure our interest in the hero that is to be. It will be better to leave the magnitude and details of the conflict to imagination. In that case there must be some one to tell the story; and it will not

The battle to be reported, not shown.

[1] The Folio text does not give "Anon," as found generally in modern readings, to the Third Witch.

do to wait for it until all is over. Some eyewitness must come in from the scene and report while the fight is on. Naturally this person, who is to withdraw before the battle is finished, will have been wounded; otherwise his testimony will not affect us very strongly. If he is wounded, and severely, his bloody plight may be used, as visual evidence and earnest, to bring the awfulness of the battle home to us more effectually. Finally, this bleeding messenger should be something more than a common soldier, lest we conceive his testimony incompetent, and lest it be lamely rendered.

To whom shall the messenger report how the fight is going? Presumably not to the King, who should be at the head of his soldiers in the field. In fact, according to Holinshed, Duncan is at this moment leading the third division of the Scottish army. Yet, to institute a sufficient contrast between Macbeth and Duncan, the author may be forced to present the King as unmartial enough to shirk the fighting, and indeed to post himself at some distance from it, not in a place of observation, but of safety. Exactly this we find Shakespeare has done. To show besides that Duncan's pusillanimousness is not merely personal, but characterises the reigning family as a whole, it will be necessary but to present Malcolm, the King's grown-up son, as having tried to fight, and as having been saved from capture by the sergeant who is later to come away wounded and tell the story. Shakespeare begins the scene by this generic characterisation of father and son.

Malcolm, as well as Duncan, unmartial.

We know from Holinshed that Macbeth was obliged to defeat the Danes, as well as the forces of Macdonwald, before he could reëstablish the power of Duncan. It will not do much harm to condense these campaigns, or rather the two great battles in which they respectively culminated, into one. It is this composite battle that Shakespeare will describe to us in the second scene. The fight with Macdonwald will of course come first. If the witch-masters in this, as Holinshed tells of it, helped Macbeth's side, they must have assisted the army and not the chieftain. Macdonwald, as we have seen, was not killed by Macbeth, and did not meet his fate till after the battle. Shakespeare must make the work of the demons more unequivocal. Macdonwald is a ruffianly warrior, apparently Macbeth's superior in strength and size. In a sword duel between these two, it should naturally go hard with Macbeth. Now the work of witchcraft becomes apparent. Macdonwald finds that he cannot command his accustomed adroitness and energy. Macbeth easily fends his thrusts, and assails him tellingly with counter-strokes. Of course Macbeth does not know that his foe is handicapped, by the agency of the Third Witch, or by some other means, to his own infinite advantage. He cannot but suppose that his success is due to some newly awakened strength and dexterity of his own. In an access of contempt for such a blundering antagonist, he lets go a thrust that the merest tyro should have warded off, and "unseams" Macdon-

The composite battle.

Macdonwald's loss of courage.

wald, armour as well as body, from the cuirass to the helmet. The combat and its issue are witnessed apparently by both armies, and Macdonwald's soldiers precipitously flee. Immediately after begins, between Macbeth's forces and the Danes, the second battle. By the same supernatural leading, Macbeth and the Berserk commander, Sweno, seem to have been brought together. Macbeth now has almost his match. It is a good place, while the combat hangs in the balance, to withdraw the man who is to tell Duncan and ourselves of Macbeth's astonishing bravery and strength. So the author brings off the sergeant — wounded apparently in the first engagement and weak now with his hurts — from the field at this point in search of doctors, and uses his coming as the occasion to start the scene.

The place for the sergeant's story.

King Duncan shows a pedantic interest in learning "of the revolt the newest state," and Malcolm almost as affectedly bids the sergeant 'say to the King the knowledge of the *broil* as he did leave it.' Duncan, Polonius-like, lets the man bleed himself faint, while he tells the wonderful story of Macbeth's slaughtering the rebel chief. He begins to explain how the single combat between Sweno and Macbeth stood, as he left it, doubtful

Further characterisation of the Duncan family.

> As two spent swimmers that do cling together
> And choke their art, —

but his strength fails him. As he reels from loss of blood, and is helped away, another messenger some-

what excitedly approaches. This time it is Ross, one of the King's thanes, with an official report.

In the interval between the sergeant's withdrawal from the field and Ross's coming, the battle with the Norwegians has been finished. Sweno has been forced, in spite of his viking rage and strength, to yield to the onslaughts of Macbeth's claymore, and sue for quarter. Shakespeare does not say specifically that the combat has been mainly a single one, between these heads of the two armies; but he certainly, in the sergeant's language just quoted, implies as much, and Ross's words bear out the same presumption. Ross is evidently no worshipper of his commanding general, as the sergeant is. He has seen nothing that he is willing to think remarkable; he does not mention Macbeth's name. Remembering that Macbeth is Duncan's cousin, and by blood equally with him entitled to the throne, we can guess Ross's feeling. Duncan's rule is a failure; the Scotch nobility despise him: Macbeth is a possible successor. But Ross, who is of rank not inferior to Macbeth, does not wish to come under the authority of one from among his peers.

But the thing that Ross does not crave is the very outcome that we desire. We wish to see Macbeth king in Duncan's place. This is the second scene of the First Act, and the "maximum consummation" is coming into view. Macbeth, through the power of the demons, has saved Scotland, and will be hailed by the whole nation as its deliverer. We know how a people idolize the

The "maximum consummation" now sighted.

hero of a telling victory. Of course we know that Macbeth could not, of himself, have won his double triumph, but that makes small difference with us. If he were really a brilliant and great man, if he had, like a Richard Cœur de Lion, put down Macdonwald and Sweno by dint of personal resources only, we should covet to see him king for his own sake. As it is, we perhaps crave mainly to witness what the witch-powers can do with him and through him for the good of Scotland. We have taken his successes as the earnest of coming prodigies of valour, and are influenced, probably more than we are aware, by the hope of seeing some of his feats enacted openly in progress of the play.

Reading between the lines.

The piece is certainly now well launched, and only seventy-nine lines have been used to impart all needful knowledge, and to engage our sympathies for the hero. These first two scenes furnish a good example of the potentialness that all great literature must embody. Very little of the meaning that has stirred us is told literally or directly. We have discerned it through and beyond the medium of the text; we have read it, as we say, between the lines. To do this is of course to interpret Shakespeare, and in some measure to discover the art by which he works. But the condensation and potentialness here are by no means typical of the play, or of literature at large. No other drama of Shakespeare's, perhaps nothing in modern authorship, is quite so hard to grasp in the opening situations. Elsewhere the *Macbeth* is simple, and worked out in

accordance with the plainest laws. Moreover, the scene just finished has involved an interruption of the plot, since it would have been more natural to present the return of the Witches, and their meeting with Macbeth, in the scene next following the one in which they are made to promise it so formally. This meeting is not to be longer delayed. The third scene opens with the Three Sisters in waiting across the path of the returning army, some minutes before the arrival of Macbeth. It will be well to revive our impressions of the Witches, and prepare imagination for their rôles. So the author provides this interval that we may hear them rehearse the mischief that they have been doing. The Second Witch has been at work, perhaps not outside the boundaries of Scotland, killing swine. The First Witch has certainly voyaged out as far as Hull, or London, or some other considerable seaport town, where sailors' wives may be seen sitting beside their cottage doors. She has been rebuffed by one of these women, and is preparing for revenge. This ship-master's wife is a devout woman probably; there is no effort or purpose to inflict bodily injury upon her. Her prayers seem to insure the protection also of her husband; the demons cannot touch his life or wreck his ship. But the First Witch is permitted to harass him by terrifying storms, and she vows to keep up this torture for nineteen months and over, almost two years. She has recouped herself provisionally, as it appears, with another victim. She has encountered somewhere in her wanderings, upon

The power of these Witches.

the sea, a similar vessel, whose master seems not to have a praying wife. She has wrecked this ship, on the homeward voyage, and exhibits to her sisters, as a trophy, torn from his dead body, its pilot's thumb. This is surely evidence enough concerning the disposition of the Witches, and the power they wield. Our hero, unless he too has a guardian to shield him with her prayers, will be in no small jeopardy. Even at this moment the Sisters are winding up a charm to his weal or ruin; for the sound of a drum tells us that Macbeth's guard of honour is approaching.

A hint of Macbeth's feelings.

It is well to know the state of Macbeth's feelings, whether he is elated over his exploits. If he were truly great, if he had won his victories himself, he would have forgotten them. His first words show that they have not by any means passed from his mind. He realises that he will be looked upon as the greatest man in Scotland. Like Dewey after the battle of Manila, he will be everybody's hero, and the chief figure in the whole country. Banquo, who has done his best, and is free from vanity, can be used as Macbeth's foil. He is thinking simply of how far it is to Forres, and how soon the march to that town will be over. At this moment the presence of the Witches becomes visible. The Witch-Norn of the Past salutes Macbeth as Thane of Glamis, a title that he has inherited lately, but not assumed as yet. The Witch-Norn of the Present hails him as Thane of Cawdor, an honour which has but a few minutes been his, and which

the King's messengers, Ross and Angus, are on their way now to make known. Of course the Witches cannot have come by the knowledge of Cawdor's sentence and Macbeth's advancement by any human means. It is a strongly dramatic moment, and carries our interest to the highest point yet reached. Then comes that for which everything thus far has furnished only preparation. The Third Witch, speaking slowly and weightily and ominously, as the Norn of the Future, declares her prophecy: —

All hail, Macbeth, *that shalt be King* hereafter!

We cannot but believe, and much as Macbeth himself believes, in the kingship the Weird Sister promises. Shakespeare has appealed to our imaginations, by this stroke, ingeniously and well. He has made us conceive the maximum consummation again, and more intensely. This repetition and intensification are common in Shakespeare's plays, and for that matter also in novels, which are typically but extended dramas, the chapter being scenes.

It is necessary that we should be committed to the fortunes of the hero much more completely. The author has done all that can be done by direct processes. His best recourse, after he has made us imagine and covet his maximum conclusion as strongly as the nature of the case allows, is to irk us with obstacles to the consummation of our wish. He presents the first of these as soon as the prophecy of the Third Witch is uttered. Macbeth starts, and seems to be afraid of something that

The Minor Obstacle.

the promised elevation will involve. We infer that he will do nothing himself to secure the crown, and will perhaps, if the army or the nobles revolt and declare for him, even resist their wish. He has seemingly felt the temptation to use the enthusiasm of his soldiers and the prestige of his double victory, as the warrant for dethroning Duncan. But his popularity is too dear to throw away, and he has apparently determined to remain wholly true and loyal to the King. But now the salutation of the Third Witch seems to stir him with concern lest he be forced to sacrifice his conscience and self-respect. His will is free; he has not been bewitched. But he is afraid lest he shall change his mind. Ross and Angus arrive, confirming the prophecy of the Second Witch, and removing all doubt from Macbeth's mind. As his confidence in the Witches grows, his unwillingness to ally himself with his destiny increases. He debates the matter absorbingly, forgetting the presence of his friends. His future, we feel, lies largely in his own choice. The scene closes with his earlier resolution unaltered, or indeed confirmed, by this decision to remain neutral and await events.

The Major Obstacle.

Of the hindrances or obstacles to the consummation of a plot, two must be exhibited as of greater prominence than the others; and one of these must last longer, and involve more effort to overcome. Macbeth's reluctance to act for himself, which has just been shown, is the Minor Obstacle. The Major Obstacle will be presented in

the next scene. This the author finds in the material, moulded almost to his hand. We have hoped, and Holinshed says that Macbeth also has hoped, that Duncan will abdicate in Macbeth's favour, or at least bequeath to him the succession. The throne is not as yet hereditary; Duncan can reward the saviour of Scotland if he will. But he expects to rule by virtue of his helplessness; he is too intrenched in his overweening, grandfatherly superiority to think of paying the country's obligations, or his own, in anything but empty promises. At the earliest moment possible, even before the dead from his faithful battalions are buried, he proclaims Malcolm Prince of Cumberland, and heir to the crown. Nothing can bring Macbeth to kingship now but the most drastic measures. Shakespeare ends the scene by starting Duncan out upon a progress, apparently to attach his thanes to himself more closely, and prevent a new rebellion. He will naturally visit first his kinsman at Inverness.

There will be no harm in our imagining ourselves, for the rest of the play, apprentices of Shakespeare, and permitted to work at his problems with him. How shall we engage Macbeth to insist a little upon his rights, and so lift the Minor Obstacle from the plot? The witch-forces must not be used further, or we shall spoil the whole. Macbeth must be left a free moral agent at any cost. Holinshed reports that Macbeth's resolution fully gave way after Duncan fixed the succession upon Malcolm. It will not do to have our hero act like that. The forces that shall carry him into revolt

Removal of the Minor Obstacle.

must come from beyond himself. The new factor that is needed can be supplied in the person of his wife.

The fifth scene need not be a long one. We must show that Macbeth, while in the field, keeps in communication with Lady Macbeth, and is inspired by her. So we can open by having Lady Macbeth read from a letter just received from her husband. By making this letter to have been written after the battle, and his meeting with the Witches, but before his interview with the King at Forres, we can indicate how constantly Macbeth has despatched couriers to her.

Lady Macbeth must not be made such a woman as to be pleased merely, when the prophecy of the Witches is reached. Her interest must amount to an immediate and compelling resolution; or, as we find, —

> Glamis thou art, and Cawdor, *and shalt be*
> *What thou art promised!*

Macbeth shall be king whether he wills or not. And she will know as well as the audience does how Macbeth is hesitating. He is too scrupulous. He would not play false, yet is not unwilling, if he may win, to win unrightly. It will not do to make her resolve thus for her own sake. It must be for her husband, because she loves him, is proud of him, and believes him deprived scandalously of his deserts. She must not seem conscienceless or evil, but so intense of temperament and imagination as to real-

Lady Macbeth impatient for her husband's advancement.

ise to the uttermost the promise and the opportunity that are theirs.

Knowledge that the King is coming will naturally arouse Lady Macbeth's energies to the highest pitch. Duncan is an unsuspicious, inoffensive man; she feels that almost anything can happen, if he is once shut up within her castle. It will not do to show her coarse or cruel; we should fail of everybody's sympathy for her and for her husband. We must make her betray to us, by a fresh soliloquy, what a supreme and awful thing, to her own soul, she is conceiving. We must make her tremble at the thought of violence and blood. We must make her cry out to the unseen powers, evil ones, to the witch-masters, if need be, for help against the weakness of her nature. Shakespeare does just these things, and grandly: —

> Come, you spirits
> That tend on mortal thoughts; unsex me here,
> And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full
> Of direst cruelty!

Her conscience, she knows, will torture her. She must pray to be fortified against that: —

> Stop up th' access and passage to remorse,
> That no compunctious visitings of nature
> Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
> The effect and it.

Then her womanly instincts and promptings, the desire to mother helplessness and infirmity, like Duncan's, must be given up, however precious, for her husband's sake. Never was there prayer more

pathetic and self-immolating than this cry for help against her maternal nature: —

> Come to my woman's breasts
> And take my milk for gall, you murth'ring ministers,
> Wherever in your sightless substances
> You wait on nature's mischief!

Finally, there is the dread of seeing the victim and his ghastly wound, to be reckoned with; the fear, too, of the searching eye of God, who it may be will thunder out in protest against the killing of so true a saint: —

> Come, thick night,
> And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
> That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
> Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
> To cry, "Hold, hold!"

Lady Macbeth's worship of her husband.

Lady Macbeth must worship her husband in no ordinary measure; such devotion and sacrifice were else incredible. It will be well to bring this out. Now, as Macbeth's hurried step is heard outside, comes the opportunity. We shall have her greet her husband in the fullest pride and admiration of the feats which he has told her of, and which she thinks all his: —

> *Great* Glamis! *Worthy* Cawdor!
> *Greater than both*, by the all-hail hereafter!

Macbeth's first fear.

Macbeth, in spite of Duncan's ingratitude and snubs, is not disloyal. He is not ready to will harm to the King, whom he has always stood by valorously. His conscience is clear thus far. He has known no fears until now, when he

reads the determination in Lady Macbeth's face, and hears her say that Duncan shall never go out from their castle. He has been made such a man from the beginning as would blanch at a turn like this. The risk and rashness of such a course are patent to any masculine imagination. Only her feminine intensity keeps Lady Macbeth from seeing the ruin that it will bring upon her husband and herself. Of all possible plots, that of killing Duncan in their own home is probably the most foolish. But this is not what we want our audience to see or feel at present. We wish merely to get its more complete sympathy, through the dismay that Lady Macbeth's resolve arouses in him, for Macbeth; and that has now been done.

Banquo to serve as Duncan's chamberlain.

Will it not be well to bring Duncan once more to view, as he comes into the power of Lady Macbeth, before his doom? He must have a chamberlain, who shall be responsible for his safety. It will save the introduction of a new character to put Banquo at that service. It will be well also, if we think our audience can bear it, to exhibit Duncan's refined, poetic nature more completely. There must be a new scene, of course; and Shakespeare will need but two paragraphs to show him as a man born out of his proper age into a century of intrigue and violence. We shall not let Macbeth come out to welcome his kinsman; he is still too agitated. Lady Macbeth will assume all smiles and graciousness, yet will scarcely escape the temptation to allude, in deepest irony, to

> those honours deep and broad wherewith
> Your majesty loads our house.

Duncan will be flattered most comfortably, and feel that he has done exceedingly well by his deliverer.

The first crisis of the play is reached. Macbeth's aversion must now give way, or be established in the plot. It is possible to have the Minor Obstacle, in plays and novels, eventuate according to the wishes of the reader, or against them. In *The Winter's Tale* and *Cymbeline*, as we shall presently see in detail, the Minor Obstacle remains unabated, and brings its worst of consequences in each case upon the after-play. In the seventh scene, which must now begin, we shall resist the temptation to enact the banquet to Duncan's honour. We can have music playing, and the noise of plate and glasses, in the great feasting hall, with waiters and butlers passing and repassing thither and from it. The audience will on these hints adequately picture the scene within, — the King in comfort, Lady Macbeth plying her guest with demonstrative attentions, and her husband sitting in laboured and unassisting submission. Then, if we have anything like the tact of Shakespeare, we shall in due time bring away Macbeth, overcome by the influences of Duncan's naïve and trustful presence, to advise with himself effectually. We shall make him develop his scruples and hesitation into definite reasons, five of them, why he shall remain neutral and loyal. As soon as he has declared himself, the work of Lady Macbeth must begin. She will have divined the cause of his leaving his guest, and will go out to re-

assume control, and prevent revolt. She will naturally first try sarcasm. He knows that he is her ideal of daring and heroism. If she is made to insinuate that his courage is not equal to his ambition, he will be stirred. What she, who is no conqueror of Sweno or Macdonwald, could do with her own babe, — or thinks she could, — were his problems hers, will put him to very shame. Then the suggestion of a plan, which in the exigency will seem not only practicable but brilliant, and the thing is done: —

> I am settled, and bend up
> Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.

The Minor Obstacle has been lifted, and the First Act precipitately ends. The close of the First Act is always shaped and determined thus in Shakespeare, on the proper resolution of the earlier or Minor Obstacle. A corresponding break, generally after about one-fifth of the whole number of pages, will be found typical in the structure of the novel.

The place for closing a First Act.

The resolution of the Major Obstacle comes close after the resolution of the Minor, with but a scene between. The Major Obstacle is always removed or established in the second scene of the Second Act. Sometimes, as in *Cymbeline*, the intervening scene is but a makeshift one. There is plenty of substance out of which to make a first scene here. It is necessary to show Banquo's defection from loyalty. He has read out of Macbeth's face, during the banquet, and out of Lady Macbeth's suppressed excitement,

what they are intending. He has ushered Duncan to his apartments, and seen his master in bed for the night, yet with no least word of warning. He should have placed a guard over his charge. Instead, he lets the King go to his doom. Yet, to show that he is not actively disloyal, it may be well to have Macbeth approach him with overtures for a transferred allegiance. Shakespeare does this with inimitable succinctness and strength: —

Banquo's defection from the King.

> *Macbeth.* If you shall cleave to my consent, when 'tis,
> It shall make honour for you.
> *Banquo.* So I lose none
> In seeking to augment it, but still keep
> My bosom franchis'd and my allegiance clear,
> I shall be counsell'd.

It is Macbeth's first defeat. He will never speak to Banquo about "cleaving to his consent," again.

Will Macbeth be equal to the execution of his resolve? Since taking that resolution, he is a changed man. He is not bewitched, perhaps, but the evil powers have possessed his soul. The demon influences are by, and can easily furnish means of exhibiting to us how their victim feels. They shall display to him, and us, a phantom dagger, and make it move before him toward Duncan's chamber. Macbeth will not start, or shudder, or feel horror at the thought of following. On the contrary, he finds himself prompted to clutch it. Drops of blood come out upon the blade and handle. It is an uncanny, diabolic spectacle; but Macbeth senses nothing abnormal or hostile to his

The new consciousness of Macbeth.

moral nature. Out from the stillness of the night rise suggestions and visions, not of innocence, but of the blackest and most revolting crimes.

The interest from Lady Macbeth's devotion may be culminated now. When she first dismayed her husband, on his return from the fighting, by her decision, she resolved that she would make him king in his own despite, and without his help. The worriment that her purpose has since caused him stirs her soul with a new enthusiasm. He has consented to do the deed, and she is to signal to him, by striking upon the bell, when all things are ready. Her love is ample; the intensity of her vision has endowed her with an amazing power of will. Why not have her actually, when she goes to Duncan's chamber, attempt the deed? She must not achieve it; that would make her out a monster. It will stir pity to have her try. She craves the daring and firmness of a man. Why not have her borrow strength, as she has heard that men sometimes, in such moments, do? So she shall drink wine, in the hope even yet to surprise her husband. How she longs to tell him that he need not go, after all, to Duncan's chamber, that he shall be king, as he has always wished, without effort of his own. The spectacle of a woman laying up for herself anguish and perdition of soul, to save her husband from the consciousness of crime, is telling, and cannot be spared from the play. So we should show Lady Macbeth, with cheeks flushed by drink, after the ineffectual attempt, at the opening of the second scene.

Lady Macbeth to assay the killing.

With Macbeth's dagger strokes, the Major Obstacle disappears. Malcolm no longer stands between Macbeth and the throne. Duncan is dead, and no mortal eye has seen the murderer at his work. How shall the King's escort of thanes learn of the deed? Shall the castle awake in quiet, and come upon the horrible secret without warning? The tragic tension is too great for such delay. There is a better way to have Scotland know. The King's party is large, and some have been forced to lodge outside the castle. Certain of these may be made to come and arouse their people who are within. To keep the stage occupied, they must present themselves before Lady Macbeth and her husband leave it. By making Duncan to have proposed to set out early, we may have them knock vigorously on the castle gate, to wake the porter, before daylight. This will furnish the climax of the scene, — Macbeth half-crazed and trembling, shut up in the castle with his crime, and the world knocking and waiting to come in from without.

The Major Obstacle removed.

The knocking upon the gate.

To bring in the world without too great precipitancy, the knocking must be repeated; the porter must not too soon answer to the call. That the delay may be reasonable, we need only to bring out that the servants have caroused, on the King's largess, till the second cock. To give some background of diabolism, we can ordain that there has been a storm, which was spoken of as gathering, after midnight, in the first scene of this act.

Of course Lady Macbeth and her husband have

yet their chief ordeal to undergo; they must meet the searching eyes of the King's thanes, and behave as if wholly surprised, and scandalised, and horrified at the murder. Of course they cannot possibly escape suspicion; on the very face of things the guilt is theirs. No motive could be conceived for such action, on the part of anybody else, in the whole kingdom. Neither Macbeth nor his wife is in any sort of neurotic preparation for the coming strain. It would not be possible to have them meet it well, even if we wished. Our purpose, if we are artistic, must be to be true. If we are true, we must let causes work out their full conclusion. Macbeth will be lamest here in matters touching the King's person, and the death chamber, which he cannot bear to approach. He will make his first mistake when he leads Macduff to the door, by not proposing to go within, or at least to knock. Macduff, who is the strong man of the play, will remember this omission later, and have his opinion about what it means. Lady Macbeth, on hearing the castle bell, will come out too quickly, and so betray that she has been waiting for a cue. She is ideal in her acting, when she demands what is going on, to require such summons; but she errs sadly enough in subordinating her horror at the King's murder to the circumstance of its occurring in her house. The ringing of the bell is an excellent expedient for bringing in the other characters immediately, and hurrying the scene forward. It serves especially to

Macbeth's and Lady Macbeth's first blunders.

Banquo not awakened by the bell.

show that Banquo was not awaked by the noise, but was ready to start from his more distant apartment when the signal came. Malcolm and Donalbain, on the other hand, have been certainly aroused from sleep, since from chambers next Duncan's, which are nearest, they come in last of all. Other guests, of course, besides those named in the stage directions, together with the various servants of the castle, have responded to the summons.

So far matters have not gone wholly ill; no disastrous blunders have been committed. But the hardest trials are yet to come. To discuss and sift the evidence concerning the author of the crime, to give testimony as household-heads touching the supposed safety of their guest, will be taxing in the extreme to both the culprits. But we must not, with details, prolong the scene. It can be ended dramatically by a pair of incidents, epitomising respectively the resources as well as weaknesses of each character. Macbeth may be made to have killed the grooms, from fear of their denials, when he entered with Lennox the King's chamber. His confession of this will bring upon him Macduff's excited and cruel question, —

*Wherefore* did you so?

There will be no standing before that. Any attempt to answer will be sheer ruin. The reader must at once divine how Macduff will be disposed toward the kingship that is coming. Macbeth's idiotic explanation will make the thanes look significantly at each other. Lady Macbeth

Macbeth's fatal blunder.

will have doubtless planned, at some moving point or other in these proceedings, to feign a swoon. It will arrest the contempt somewhat, and help her husband, to do it now, — or is she genuinely aghast and prostrated at what she has seen in the thanes' faces? To show how the lords regard her, and how far Macbeth is from assuming that the swoon is real, we can make these chivalrous lords, as well as her husband, refrain from lending assistance as she falls. The climax may be strengthened by having Macduff and Banquo, whose conviction is strongest, bid the attendants, somewhat demonstratively and patronisingly, "Look to the lady."

Lady Macbeth unaided by the thanes or Macbeth.

When the two obstacles are on the reader's mind, he loses sight of the maximum consummation. After they are resolved, it looms again to view. The audience will now expect and demand the fulfilment of the promise with which the play began. It will not be best to permit the sight, at present, of Macbeth crowned. A fourth scene can adjust the murder to the perspective of the times, and make known that the sovereignty will fall certainly upon Macbeth.

The new action with which the Third Act always begins, is invariably of moment, and shapes the course of the plot. It will be wise as well as fitting, now, whatever may be the outcome of the new rule, to show Macbeth as King, and Lady Macbeth as Queen. If their usurpation is not to be successful, it will

Macbeth and Lady Macbeth appear crowned but once.

be best to keep their crowns from sight for the remainder of the play. The plot, as found in Holinshed, requires that Banquo be cut off from all possible interference with Macbeth's success. We can engage the sympathies of the audience for Macbeth, as against his enemy and rival, by making Banquo ready to conspire against the sovereignty just set up. His late disloyalty toward Duncan will have prepared for this. The audience expects Macbeth to enter, at once, upon a brilliant and strong career. It will wish that he assert himself, in this case, with severity and speed. If we show Banquo secretive, evasive, with reference to his plans and movements, on Macbeth's inquiring, it will be tantamount to proof that he is dangerous. This will insure Macbeth warrant to proceed against him by whatever means.

We were not much interested in Macbeth, at the beginning, on his own account. The interference of the Witches aroused us. On learning something of Macbeth's self-respect and dread of evil-doing, we found our interest in him very much enhanced. Lady Macbeth's sublime devotion and self-sacrifice have won our sympathy, at least dramatically, for her and for her cause. Such a woman and such a husband should survive; so grandly endowed with spiritual possibilities, they should come to their best of usefulness and strength. This is the maximum consummation that we always crave for characters discerned as capable of living the largest and highest quantum of existence. But Macbeth and Lady Macbeth will not survive, since they have sought the largest living on impossi-

ble conditions ; and the end is tragedy. But the tragedy does not consist in the mere fact of death or suffering ; it is because of the promise and the possibilities that come thus to naught. It consists in death or suffering wholly at variance with the proper spiritual desert of the victim. The author has expected from the first to disappoint us ; the nature of the theme materials compels it.

Why *Macbeth* is tragedy.

To develop the tragedy of Macbeth within the limits of a play, requires swift changes. The murder of Banquo may be used to precipitate the issue. Nothing resulted from the death of Banquo, according to Holinshed, as affecting the comfort and firmness of Macbeth's mind. We can cause him to behave in such a way as to furnish evidence of his guilt with Duncan ; we can show him half crazed with remorse and fear. When the people of Scotland know that it has a self-condemned ruler, it will cast him off. But how shall Macbeth be made to betray to them his secret ? He has been made from the beginning a man much under the control of the finer sentiments. Conscience, then, will be the means. Moreover, the Witches have put Banquo, as to ultimate rule in Scotland, far above himself. Macbeth hates the man who renders the death of Duncan of no effect, with perfect hatred. If he could get at his rival, he would strike him fiendishly. He must be made to reach this enemy, by some means, with his own arm.

Macbeth's hate of Banquo.

Macbeth knows what it is to take the burdens of murder upon his soul. He will naturally strive, in

this case, to put the responsibility upon others. If Banquo has retainers who believe that they have been wronged by their chief, he will send for them. When he has persuaded two men of this sort to undertake the deed, ostensibly for their own revenge, he will not leave them to execute it without surveillance. The Third Murderer. But what surveillance can there be except his own? He will put on disguises, and join the assassins as a Third Murderer. He will have spies follow Banquo, to find where he goes, whom he meets; and one of these spies will indicate, perhaps by beacon signal, the approximate arrival of their victim, upon return.

Thus Macbeth will be enabled to approach the object of his hate, and make the despatchment sure. 'Twenty mortal murthers.' He will naturally strike his victim, wherever he may reach him, many times. So there will be unsightly mutilation. Macbeth will not dare betray his identity to the other murderers, although Fleance should be at once pursued, but will return now with them to the palace. They will not, of course, find Macbeth, 'to report how much is done.' Then the Third Murderer will order the pursuit of Fleance, and the burial of Banquo's body. Free now from the First and the Second Murderer, Macbeth will lay aside his disguises, mingle with his guests, and wait with them ostensibly for Banquo's coming, but really for reports from the pursuit of Fleance. Banquo was killed just at dark, at seven o'clock (*cf.* III. i. 42) or after. Three hours later they will give Banquo up, and his cover will be removed from the table.

How far the audience is to hold Macbeth bewitched, need not be settled here. It must premise merely that the Witches lie in wait for his soul. We need not force the reader to settle whether or not they lured him to his attack on Banquo's life. Let them take advantage merely of the opportunity that they now have to precipitate Macbeth to his ruin. The twenty gashes inflicted in frenzy upon Banquo's head will have turbaned his hair unspeakably with gore. The Witches will raise an apparition, with this head, boltered with blood and (*cf.* III. iv. 79) brains perhaps, as a main feature of fright, and make Macbeth identify the ghastly spectacle as his work. The thought that this mutilation exists only in the apparition, and not on Banquo, is estopped by the testimony of the murderer (III. iv. 27) who buried him.[1]

Why Banquo's hair is turbaned with gore.

Turning to the text of the play, we see how deeply and subtly the author has planned for this vital moment. He has made Macbeth as timorous and sensitive, almost, as a woman, in order that a bloody spectre of his own butchery may be to the uttermost appalling. He has presented Macbeth as sleepless and half crazed, since the preceding murder. He has put Macbeth's hand into Banquo's killing, to insure the mutilation. He has shaped the waiting so that Banquo's place may not remain unfilled. Then, as Mac-

After compromising Macbeth, the apparition withdrawn.

[1] That the audience may not doubt the diabolic origin of the ghost, Shakespeare will exhibit it again, and as unequivocally the product of witchcraft, in (ll. 123, 124) the first scene of the next act. *Cf.* p. 219.

beth in his sottish and dazed security ventures to propose the health of the guest whom he has helped to kill, he has the witch-raised apparition sit in Macbeth's place, — the sole one left unoccupied. The rest follows without manipulation. Macbeth will identify his bloody work, and blench at the ghost's significant recognition. Unmanned at what seems to him the real presence of Banquo here, he will make compromising allusions, supposing that all see as he sees: —

> Prithee, see there! Behold! Look! Lo! How say you?
> Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too.
> If charnel-houses and our graves must send
> Those that we bury back, our monuments
> Shall be the maws of kites.

The climax of the scene.

The lords have probably not begun to suspect that Macbeth has meddled with Banquo's life. They will naturally suppose that the spectre which Macbeth sees is Duncan's. As soon as Macbeth sufficiently betrays himself, the Witches will withdraw the apparition. To confirm the suspicions of the lords, who will spread the story of Macbeth's terrors broadcast, the Witches will show Banquo's ghost again, not nodding and shaking its gory locks, but glaring and petrifyingly terrible. Macbeth will quail this time more than ever. The first time, he forgets the horror as soon as the apparition is out of sight. The Witches see to it that there is no forgetting now. Macbeth can be made to express surprise that his guests are not stirred by the sights that have made him tremble. The lords, will-

ing to entrap him, will ask, What sights? Macbeth will have so far forgotten, for agony, that he has a secret, that he will be about to declare, as the merest matter of course, what he has seen. Lady Macbeth, realising the jeopardy, will drive away the guests, and stop the word, 'Duncan,' that she thinks he is ready to pronounce. To make this moment practicable, Lady Macbeth should not know surely that Banquo is despatched, or suspect that it is the vision of a later victim that unnerves her husband. Shakespeare has made Macbeth, in Scene ii preceding, keep from her definite knowledge of his purpose.

The subjective climax of the play.

At the middle of the Third Act, Shakespeare develops the subjective climax of a play. The real climax comes near the end. At the first climax the author makes us prefigure the outcome of the whole. Our imaginations possess themselves of the issue, and our sympathies are much aroused over the fate that we foresee. When the ghost appears the second time, and we have heard Macbeth betray himself, we feel pretty confidently advised how the piece will close. The subjective climax not only comes at the middle of a play, but coincides as here with the climax of the scene.

After the lords have gone home and begun to talk, public sentiment will turn violently against Macbeth. A scene, here the sixth of the act, must be given to show the change. The First and Third Acts are generally connected closely with the ones following. Act I is separated from Act II by only a few hours. Act IV begins the day after the banquet. The

even-numbered acts, on the other hand, are followed ordinarily by longer intervals. Act III begins some days after the close of Act II. Act V waits for the news (*cf.* p. 223) from England.

The decline of Macbeth from his favour and success must be accelerated. Within two acts the end must be reached. The visit to the Witches, which Macbeth proposes at the end of the banquet scene, can be made of signal consequences to the hero. The Sisters have seemed powerful before; they can be shown repulsive now. At the first meeting, they sought Macbeth; now Macbeth seeks them. To save time, there may be a filthy cauldron and revolting incantations. All the influence of these things will be charged to Macbeth's account. Were it not necessary to advance quickly, less drastic means might be chosen. The scenes in that case would be more numerous and prolonged.

Macbeth degraded by applying to the Witches.

Macbeth has undergone terrible experiences resulting from the two murders. He will not wish to multiply his woes. The Witches are his guardian genii; he will naturally turn to them, and they will deceive him, and allure him yet more irrevocably to his fall. We have seen examples of their power in the air-drawn dagger, and the ghost of Banquo, but apart from their visible agency and presence. They may well be made to furnish some spectacular proof of the forces that they can command. There can be an ingenious and telling exhibition of the diabolic masters, whom they serve, and whom the audience would like to see in material shape. The prophecy of the Third

Witch to Banquo, — believed by Shakespeare's public to have been fulfilled, may be dramatically realised by a stage device. Moreover, those who have failed to trace the thread of diabolism to which the pretended apparition of Banquo is attached, will be set right by seeing it again (*cf.* p. 215) and as the indubitable product of the Witches' power. The first figure in the show of eight kings will be like the spirit of Banquo, as it looked at the great feast; but the figure that is to represent Banquo in his turn shall be no less than the blood-boltered presence by which Macbeth has been lately crazed, not this time shaking its head and leering, but smiling in a not unforgiving mood.

The pretended ghost of Banquo.

Another step in another scene will enact, from Holinshed, the butchery of Lady Macduff and her children. It is needed to reduce still lower the reader's enthusiasm for his hero. The problem here is of the simplest. It is well in a scene so far on as this one to avoid bringing in new characters alone. So we may have Ross, as a relative of Lady Macduff, and commissioned by her husband to tell of his flight to England, connect the new action with the play. One of the children, the most precocious, will be shown with the mother, and the sympathies of the audience must be strongly engaged for both. It will be enough if we show the character of the mother, through her pain at what she thinks is Macduff's neglect, and exhibit the penetration of her boy against her attempts to mystify him about his father. The lad may be ideal-

Another scene needed to degrade Macbeth.

ised, at the end, when the murderers come, by being made to attempt the rôle of protector to his mother. It will be practicable to have the murderers appear in hairy disguises, such as would make most boys, of this one's years, run to their mother's skirts for refuge. This boy looks steadily into the face of the shag-haired villain, and receives the stroke of his dagger without crying, and proposes even to stay by the murderer and detain him, that his mother may escape. The reader will be forced thus to recognise how stalwart must be the father of such a lad, and what have been the strength and daring of the Macduff family in generations preceding. The effect of the scene will certainly go far toward effacing the qualities that have seemed hitherto admirable in Macbeth.

The mother, the father, idealised through the boy.

The limitations of the theme and of the plot become onerous now. The Duncan type of king, which we esteemed so lightly and wished wiped out of the play, must be made acceptable; for the crown shall go to Malcolm after all. Macbeth has lost much favour; but we are by no means willing to contemplate a second Duncan, or anything like a second Duncan, as his successor. There is evidently much to be done before the audience can bear the hint of such an outcome.

We can do nothing here without our master. Probably there is no man living who could execute this task in the space of two hundred and forty lines. He opens scene iii, in which the work must be done, just after Macduff has told Malcolm of Scotland's plight. Macduff has

Malcolm subordinates Macduff.

taken for granted that any rightful heir to the throne, on listening to such a tale, would see his duty and accept it. Perhaps we, knowing Malcolm as we do, have not taken for granted any such thing. He must be shown at first such as we expect. More than this, he professes to be in fear lest Macduff have come in treachery, as Macbeth's tool, 'to offer up a poor weak innocent lamb, to appease an angry god.' Even Macduff's impetuous enthusiasm gives way at this,—

> I have lost my hopes. Bleed, bleed, poor country !

The only process by which a character like Malcolm's may be restored is a negative one. We must discover to our reader certain qualities that he has supposed wanting, and lead him, through changing his mind about these, to change it concerning the whole man. Malcolm is made to subordinate Macduff by getting him to believe certain libels that he affirms upon himself. He manages this so sturdily as to arouse something like detestation in Macduff: —

> Fit to govern !
> No, not to live. O nation miserable,
> With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,
> When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,
> Since that the truest issue of thy throne
> By his own interdiction stands accurs'd,
> And does blaspheme his breed? Thy royal father
> Was a most sainted king. The queen that bore thee
> Oftener upon her knees than on her feet
> Died every day she liv'd. Fare thee well!
> These evils thou repeatest upon thyself
> Have banish'd me from Scotland.

To have managed the stalwart Macduff so easily and strongly, makes us see something in the man. The hint of a monkish, saintly nature, now (ll. 108, 109) first put forward to palliate Duncan's failure, helps not a little. This is a side of Duncan's character that has thus far received scant justice from the audience. The type of kingship that Edward the Confessor is successfully evincing, and the traditions of his reign, since the present scene is laid at his very court, may be levied on. Shakespeare has a doctor come out from the presence of the king, and give unhesitating though reluctant testimony — doctors are always sceptical about healers — that the King can cure. By making Malcolm take up the matter, and explain it fully, the author manages to invest him with something of the dignity and importance that belong to the two kings somewhat in common. Edward the Confessor was not an efficient ruler; but his goodness, or rather perhaps his piety, has considerably coloured the history of his reign. Malcolm comes away from contact with his prototype palpably stronger and more adequate for the future that is before him.

Duncan, of the Edward Confessor type of king.

The chief use of the doctor episode.

Malcolm, for the next thing, must be made more tolerable and sufficient as a martial figure. The author must undo the impressions, of callow and ineffectual valour, that he gave us on first presenting (I. ii. 3–5) the character. Macduff does not yet know what has happened to his family since his flight. Ross can be made of

Malcolm to be amended martially.

similar service to him as to his wife before her fate reached her, and will attract less attention, in a repeated rôle, than a new messenger. He can be supposed to have been informed against, for going to Macduff's castle, and to be fleeing now to England from Macbeth's wrath. The heaviness of the blow prostrates Macduff, and Malcolm in rallying him gets himself into the royal superiority which we are not unwilling that he should assume. Here is a delicate moment. We are ready to change sides. Macduff's new, personal motive of vengeance, in addition to his former one of patriotism, brings us over. The mention (ll. 190–192) of old Siward,—

The audience goes over to Macduff's side.

> An older and a better soldier none
> That Christendom gives out, —

as fighting *under* Malcolm, already reënforced by Macduff's strength and zeal, makes us accept the stripling prince, without well knowing what we do, as the coming man of Scotland.

As was said earlier, between the even acts and the odd ones following, when the plot materials allow, are placed the longest intervals. The Fourth Act is typically a preparing-time; it has shown us here the massing and marshalling of the forces that shall overthrow Macbeth. The Fifth Act need not wait until Malcolm and his English troops arrive. At word that they are coming, we can make the Scottish nobles rise, and draw Macbeth into the field against them. Then Lady Mac-

The Fourth Act a preparing-time.

beth, foreseeing the retribution and the end, will begin to walk in her sleep. Macbeth, before he leaves her, will send his court physician to treat her malady. Through occasion of the doctor's presence, we may enable the audience to study her again, and know what sufferings she is undergoing. The scene, though great in possibilities, is not difficult to construct, and will be easily intelligible to the reader.

The climax in the sleep-walking scene.

Of course Shakespeare's climax of 'the smell of blood still,' could never have been reached by another workman. How much it tells of an exquisite nature, born for the best and noblest living, and unequal utterly to the burdens of remorse! Lady Macbeth believed that, might she but make her husband king, she could pay the price. But she has lost her soul, and her husband's love, and all her peace of mind; and she has dreaded the vengeance of Scotland so poignantly as to have become virtually insane.

Macbeth, on hearing of the approach of the English army, withdraws from the campaign against his revolted thanes to Dunsinane, where Lady Macbeth is staying, and intrenches himself. How the prophecy of the Witches' prophecy is fulfilled, how he goes out in frenzy and fights after all in the open field, it is not necessary to treat. The time for the consummation is reached; but the conclusion that the reader sighted and coveted, at the beginning, will be denied. Whether a play is tragedy or comedy, does not depend solely upon the outcome, but is a resultant in which the Major and the

The Obstacles and the Consummation.

Minor Obstacle are palpable factors. The two obstacles in the piece just analysed were each resolved in a manner that we approved, that is, comedially. In spite of all, the play has turned out a tragedy. Of course, the explanation lies in the fact that we were duped, through the author's acquaintance with the springs of feeling, into a dramatic demand for Macbeth's success that was really at variance with our principles. After the author had captured our sympathies, he let the inevitable consequences of his hero's action work themselves out. The end was not at all affected by our consenting to Macbeth's crimes. Some good people have held that Shakespeare shaped the piece as we find it because he was a wicked man, and wished evil, like what Macbeth attempted, everywhere to prevail. We are pretty certain, for our part, that he did what he did because he had to make a play, probably on King James's requisition, out of the Macbeth materials. The play could not have been made if the reader was to be devoid of sympathy all the way through Macbeth's career.

Comparison of *Macbeth* with *Cymbeline*.

It will be helpful, at this point, to compare the construction of the plays that have been examined with this one. In *Cymbeline* both the Major and the Minor Obstacle were encountered in scene iv of the First Act. We should have thought, perhaps, that the Queen's schemes are the chief obstruction that has prevented the course of true love from running smoothly. This, indeed, is true; but since the Queen's opposition only ceases with her death, almost at the end, no use can be made of it in

the mechanics of the plot. The obstacles, technically so called, must be presented and do their work before the close of the First Act.

As a matter of fact, Shakespeare does not arouse us over the Queen's ambition for her son in the same degree to which he stirs us by the obstacles in *Macbeth.* We somehow find ourselves reposing in a sort of faith that the author will not suffer Imogen, so far as her father and Cloten are concerned, to come to harm. But when we are introduced to Iachimo, in Scene iv, and learn his wish to possess the ring that Posthumus is wearing, the case is different. Knowing his Iago nature, we are in very lively concern lest he procure some means of compromising Imogen to her husband. The chance or probability of this misfortune is the Major Obstacle for the present play, and it proceeds from Iachimo alone. As the scene evolves Posthumus's consent to commend Iachimo to his wife, we become anxious lest Imogen unwittingly afford the villain some opportunity to achieve evidence against her. This fresh concern, which grows acute on the arrival of Iachimo, or at the beginning of his interview with Imogen, is the Minor Obstacle; and it proceeds from Imogen's nature almost wholly. It is resolved, of course, when Iachimo secures Imogen's consent to receive the trunk. We had hoped that Iachimo would not succeed in gulling Imogen into any confidence in his words or wishes. But this obstacle is resolved tragically, and the First Act closes forthwith. The Major Obstacle is likewise re-

The Major Obstacle in Iachimo.

The Minor Obstacle in Imogen.

solved tragically when we see Iachimo possess himself of the bracelet, in the second scene of the Second Act. The play, however, ends comedially in accordance with the worth of the heroine and the eternal fitness of things, yet seems not to have been regarded by the author as properly a comedy. It stands last, in the Folio of 1623, in the list of tragedies. Remembering the proofs, found lately in our study of Shakespeare's partiality for this heroine, we can scarcely wonder. Imogen is of no such heroism as befits her to endure the burdens of shame and sorrow that are laid upon her. The favourable issue of the plot does not fully make amends. So the play may be called a tragedy.

*Cymbeline* a tragedy.

In *The Winter's Tale* there is no technical question about the obstacles. The chief hinderance to the royal and domestic felicity of Hermione and her husband is unmistakably the husband's jealousy. We hope it will be lifted before alienation ensues, and before the matter has become a public scandal. We encounter this obstacle, which is the Major one, before Polyxenes's answer to Hermione is reached. After Polyxenes concludes to stay, in the face of troubles that he must know he is intensifying, we are exercised over the prospect of further mischief. In the week that must now be added to his nine months' visit, how shall he escape numberless occasions, like these we have just witnessed, of kindling the rage of Leontes? Even his presence here, presumed to be due to Hermione's attractions, is dangerous to the welfare of the king-

Obstacles in *The Winter's Tale.*

dom. Thus Polyxenes, in his person, as well as in the things he may do unwittingly, furnishes the Minor Obstacle.

As has been earlier noted, there are properly two new situations, each amounting in importance almost to a scene, before the close of the First Act. The first of these begins at l. 209, and is devoted to the evolution of Camillo's feigned consent to murder Polyxenes. At l. 364 the second of these situations is set up: Polyxenes is made to enter and find out from Camillo the King's purpose. It is necessary that the Minor Obstacle should be resolved tragically. Hermione must be tried; and to that end Leontes's jealousy must blaze forth. Polyxenes must furnish the occasion; Hermione cannot. The least costly of all possible expedients will be to make Polyxenes run away, secretly, and as Leontes will think, guiltily, from the Sicilian court.

The King will at once of course accuse Hermione, and the disgraceful news will be spread throughout the kingdom. Then the Major Obstacle also will have been tragically resolved. The place where it is resolved is the second situation in the Second Act. The author does not exalt the attack of Leontes upon his wife into a specific scene; it is too dismal. But Hermione's pain and suffering are much less than her husband's. She is stronger than Imogen; she is more heroic and less domestic. So Shakespeare seems to hold that the redemption of Leontes and the restoration of Perdita, at the end, overweigh the pain they cost, hence enters

*The Winter's Tale* a comedy.

the play as comedy. It stands last in the list of comedies in the great Folio.

In *Romeo and Juliet* the maximum consummation rises in our imagination as soon as Juliet is shown. Here is the affinity of the hero; we wish that Romeo find her, and recognise her rare, strange worth, and win her to himself. But there is the enmity between the houses — no insignificant Major Obstacle, certainly. Romeo is to see Juliet, through the opportunity of a mask, at her father's house. As the moment approaches, a new concern takes hold of us. Will not Romeo fail, from his abnormal and distant worship of Rosaline, to discern Juliet's nature; and will not Juliet, fancy-free, miss the meaning of Romeo's eyes and voice? This minor anxiety gives way when we hear Romeo say and Juliet say what feelings have been stirred in each. With these somewhat oracular avowals the Minor Obstacle is raised comedially, and the First Act ends.

The Obstacles in *Romeo and Juliet.*

We have realised already, in some measure, what the enmity of two great houses must have meant, in the fourteenth century, to the hopes of a Juliet and a Romeo. They may well pause and count the cost. The fiery Capulet will cast out his daughter, perhaps strike her dead, when he shall hear; that Juliet knows right well. By making us understand, in the first scene of Act II, how indifferent Romeo is to the claims of the Montagues, the author centres the Major Obstacle in his heroine. The beautiful resolution of it that comes speedily from her, we know

something about already. But there can be no effect, from the lifting of these obstacles, in mitigation of the conclusion, which is of the deepest tragedy.

The subjective climax in these plays.

The central climax in these plays is definitely conceived, and falls, as it should, near the middle of each Third Act and of the piece. In *Cymbeline* we recognise the influences of it where (III. iv. 143–156) Imogen accepts the plan of leaving Britain for Italy in disguise. In *The Winter's Tale* we find it (III. ii. 154–203) in the King's contrition and Paulina's over-rhetorical protestations that the Queen is dead. In *Romeo and Juliet* the central climax culminates in the fourth scene of the middle act.

There are other principles of dramatic construction that Shakespeare divined and served himself with in his maturest work; but the scope of the present book will not include further inquiry of this kind. We are trying merely to get a provisional and convincing view of Shakespeare's importance as a literary figure. We have space left but to show that his genius was all-penetrating, and that his principles were universal. It was said some pages back that the novel may be looked upon as an extended drama, the chapters answering to scenes. The plan by which English and American writers of fiction hold the mirror up to nature in these days is the same essentially as we have just discovered in our consideration of *Macbeth*. Shakespeare was, perhaps, unaware of his processes and made for himself no rules, but his tact and penetra-

Novels constructed on Shakespeare's plan.

tion never failed to supply him with the vital points, even in the most refractory material. Almost at the beginning of his twenty years of playwright service, as early, at least, as the completion of the *Romeo and Juliet*, he had fixed the literary norm that the slowly evolving novel of the nineteenth century proves to have merely reproduced.

In the typical novel of the day we find the fit conclusion brought before the consciousness of the reader, to arouse his interest, relatively as early as in the plays just studied. In *Richard Carvel* this is done in the second chapter: we hope that nothing will come between Richard and his grandfather, that Richard may win Dorothy, and fall heir to the Hall. Of the obstacles recognised, the lesser one centres in Dorothy; she is wilful, and may not care for Richard. This obstacle is removed before the end of Chapter XI, which in dramatic form would close Act I. Chapter XI stops with page 115, a little past the first fifth of the whole novel. The Major Obstacle is plainly our fear of Grafton's envy, and it is comfortably resolved in Chapter XV. The middle climax falls in Chapter XXV, where Dolly comes to the prison. The whole seems to have been written in the development of a dramatic outline, such as Shakespeare would have conceived from the same material, and expanded into a play of thirty-five scenes or more.

*Richard Carvel.*

In Scott's *Quentin Durward*, which is a good example of the earlier romantic novels, we conceive and covet the conclusion before finishing Chapter IV.

*Quentin Durward.*

The first chapter of the volume, like Scott's first chapters generally, is a mere prologue of explanations, and should not be counted. Evidently the young woman of the turret chamber is of rank; we wish the hero to speed with her, and to get into circumstances where he may conquer a place and name worthy of her and of himself. The first obstacle is Quentin's unwillingness to take service, which is his evident opportunity. This Minor is resolved at the end of Chapter VI, where the hero has his option of considering himself enrolled in Lesly's retinue, or of being hanged. Here the First Act of a dramatised *Quentin Durward* would end, some dozen pages short of the first fifth of the volume proper. The Major Obstacle is our concern lest, in taking service about Plessis-les-Tours, he shall be shut away from the fair lady, with no chance of wooing her, or of recommending himself specifically and personally to the King. The discovery, in Chapter VIII, that Maître Pierre, who might keep Quentin from a free career, is no less than Louis himself, and means to keep the youth about his person in a post of trust, relieves the reader. Of course, to modern readers, the identity of Pierre ceases to be a secret several chapters earlier, but Scott did not apparently intend or expect his public to anticipate this turn. The subjective climax falls in Chapter XXI.

In Meredith's *Evan Harrington*, a novel of standard quality, published in 1861, we find the same points and proportions rather more accurately observed.

The consummation, sighted fully in Chapters II and IV, involves on Evan's part the saving of his father's honour, and the winning of Rose Jocelyn. The first of our misgivings or "obstacles" is the thought of Evan's refusing to shoulder the burden of his father's debts. This is removed at the close of Chapter IX, and at the end almost exactly of the first fifth of the work. The Major Obstacle is our concern lest Evan, by his resolve to manage his father's shop, be separated forever from the opportunity of recommending himself to Rose. This is removed, by the machinations of the Countess, at the cricket game in Chapter XIII. The subjective climax comes at the middle of the volume, where Rose, frightened and humbled at Evan's hurt, is ready to brave all for his sake. Mr. Meredith seems aware of the dramatic nature of his plot, since at the opening of Chapter XXXVIII he announces that he has just completed the Fourth Act of his comedy, as indeed, according to Shakespeare's scheme, he has.

*Evan Harrington.*

In these novels we have again illustrated that the ultimate purpose and meaning of a piece of literature, whether play or novel, are likely to be far removed from the outward happenings or aspects of the plot. *Richard Carvel* is not merely a novel of adventure, but mainly exalts, in a somewhat epic way, the cavalier period in Maryland history. *Quentin Durward* was not written to furnish a romance of Quentin and Lady Isabelle, but to make us acquainted with the character of Louis XI of France. The story of the course of their true loves

Ultimate meaning of the novels.

was told chiefly to float the details of the narrative. In *Evan Harrington* the real purpose is to deliver a blow at caste. Rose, lovely as she is, counts for much less than the hero does, being used as a means of measuring to us Evan's heroism, and manliness, and, as he considers it, his honour. That he may be true to his family and himself, he gives Rose up. It is a love-story, to be sure, but this kind of plot is chosen mainly to insure a proper personal interest in the hero in whom the principle is to be worked out.

Other forms of literature are builded upon the same fundamental plan as typical novels, and the plays of Shakespeare's school. *The Princess* of Tennyson is constructed like *Macbeth* except that there are seven parts or acts instead of five. The consummation is, of course, the union of Ida and the Prince. Two obstacles are used in working out the plot, — the aversion of the Princess to men, which is the Major, and the escapade of the invasion and the disguises, which is the Minor. The Minor is resolved comedially; Psyche detects the trick in time, and no harm comes from it to the Prince's cause. The First Act ends with Part II. The second scene of the Second Act centres in the invitation to go geologising, which resolves the Major Obstacle. The Princess is not indifferent to the Prince nor even to his ambassadresses; else she would scarcely take her gold plate along, and her satin tent, to do honour to her freshman guests. The middle of the Third Act falls, of course, in Part IV, where the

Tennyson's *The Princess.*

Princess is rescued by the Prince. Part VII is Act V. Act IV comprises Parts V and VI.

The tendency in modern literary evolution is clearly toward condensation. The novel is merging into the short story; dramatic monologues do the work of five-act plays. Even here the groundwork of obstacles, or the involving of the plot, appears to be preserved. In novels as long as *Quo Vadis* there is the same proportioning, there are the same vital points. It would be interesting to make comparisons in plays and novels outside of English, if time could be spared. The famous *Cyrano de Bergerac*, except that the maximum consummation is not sighted till the end of the First Act, is constructed upon Shakespeare's plan. There is as much reward in studying the construction of plays, in the light of common principles, as in discerning and realising their ultimate ideas. By searching out these things, the humblest reader may concern his mind with the deepest problems of art and message that authors devote their days and nights to solving.

The Short Story.

# VI

## SHAKESPEARE THE MAN

We have gained some impressions concerning Shakespeare as an artist and author, and shall probably be interested in learning what may be told about him biographically as a man. Unfortunately we are permitted to know far less of his personal than of his literary life. Not even the date of his birth has been preserved. In the records of Stratford parish it is shown that a baby boy was baptized William Shakespeare on the 26th of April, 1564. From this it has been inferred that the birth date must have been the 23d or the 22d, but we cannot be sure. The register itself is but the copy of a perished original, and shows no entry earlier than 1558.

The birth of Shakespeare.

The first mention of the great poet is thus perpetuated, not inappropriately, in formal Latin, — *Guielmus filius Johannes Shakspere.* The name of the mother, according to the custom of registers, does not appear. But it is altogether likely that, could the poet's life be told completely, the mother would figure not less prominently than the father. Great men not seldom derive their strength from the mother's side. It has been claimed that John Shakespeare's wife was of Celtic stock, and this would be agreeable and

illuminating to know, if it could be proved. A district of Warwickshire had for many generations belonged to a family of Ardens, with whom the attempt has been made to connect the poet's mother.

Our first knowledge of Shakespeare's mother in her home is derived, like most of our information about the family, from documents and records. Among the earliest entries in the Stratford register we learn of the birth and death of two baby daughters. Our first glimpse of the young mother is a glimpse of grief; and this circumstance of her losing her first children does not present her to our imagination as of large presence or conspicuous physical strength. Her other children, including the great William, with one exception, were not long-lived. The marriage of John Shakespeare and Mary Arden is not of record at Aston Cantlowe church, where it is supposed to have occurred, nor elsewhere so far as known. Thomas Cromwell's injunction to the clergy, in the reign of Henry VIII, to keep registers, seems not to have been heeded in Stratford or the parishes round about. Twenty years after, in 1558, on the accession of Elizabeth, the order was enforced with strictness. This was in season to admit the record of the little sisters and their famous brother, but not the marriage of their parents. It is, however, almost certain that this marriage took place in 1557. Robert Arden, the bride's father, died in December of 1556; and it would seem from the will, dated a few days earlier, that his favourite daughter Mary was not married,

Shakespeare's mother.

or yet contracted, at that time. On the 15th of September, 1558, according to the Stratford register, her first child, Joan Shakespeare, was baptized.

Perhaps Mary Arden would not have married so speedily had her father's life been spared. Robert Arden is believed to have been the landlord of John Shakespeare's father. When an heiress weds a man of the tenant class, other things equal, it is not because he is slow-witted or unhandsome. There are good and sufficient reasons for believing that Shakespeare's father was a man of very different abilities and accomplishments from such as were usually exhibited in that part of the country by farmers' sons. Born probably in the little hamlet of Snitterfield, four miles northeast of Stratford, he seems to have left the home, rented from Robert Arden by Richard Shakespeare his father, for that borough about 1551. After a slight apprenticeship, served we know not how, he began the business of dealing in farm products, such as grain, malt, wool, hides, tallow, mutton, beef, and prospered equally with the other tradesmen of the town, many of them doubtless to the manner born. It would seem that he was even more successful than the most of them. We find him, within ten years of his coming to Stratford, elected to offices of responsibility, and in 1568, after seventeen years of citizenship, advanced to the position of High Bailiff, the last honour in the gift of the Stratford folk. He could read and write, and was somewhat expert in the management and auditing of accounts.

Shakespeare's father.

In 1556 John Shakespeare purchased a house and garden in Henley Street, presumably with reference to the marriage that took place, as we have seen, in the following year. In this house, or it may be in the one adjoining it on the west, William Shakespeare was born. There is no proof that Shakespeare's father acquired the latter property until 1575; but it has been conjectured that he may have occupied it under lease, even after the purchase of the house next it on the east. At any rate, it is not the eastern house that is now shown as the birthplace of the poet. Here, in the one or the other home, it is likely, the parents watched their child during the awful summer of 1564. Not many weeks after its birth, the plague reached Stratford. 'In six months one sixth of their neighbours were buried. But although there was scarcely a house in which there was not one dead, there was a charm upon their threshold, and William Shakespeare lived.' The lone boy in the cradle, if he had one, was not long to live without a playmate. Turning again to the register of Stratford church, we find the christening of a brother Gilbert in 1566. There was another sister baptized in 1571, but she died before she was eight years old. Other children, who all grew to maturity, were Joan, christened in 1569, Richard, in 1574, and Edmund, in 1580.

Shakespeare's birthplace.

Stratford was a good place for a man like Shakespeare to be born in. Perhaps no spot in latitudes as high could have offered so much for awakening the soul of a great poet. The choicest of rural scenery

was within sight or reach. There were no mountains, there was no prospect of the sea; but there was England's best of forest and stream and meadow. The land was dotted with little hamlets, connected with Stratford by lanes and by-ways and sometimes by well-travelled roads. No less than a dozen of these humble villages were set within five or six miles of Shakespeare's home. Something less than four miles east-of-north lay Snitterfield, where John Shakespeare seems to have lived as a youth and perhaps was born. Three miles north-west was Wilmcote, where Robert Arden lived, and where John Shakespeare probably won Mary Arden for his bride. Two miles farther, in the same direction, on the Alne, was Aston Cantlowe, with its parish church, where Shakespeare's parents in all likelihood went to be wedded. Just out of Stratford, on the west, hardly a mile distant, was Shottery, believed to have been the home of the woman to whom Shakespeare became a husband.

Shakespeare's country.

But Stratford, in spite of the humble and secluded life led by its folk, was within the echo of the great world. On the highroad north and east, twenty miles distant, lay Coventry, accounted the third city of the kingdom, with its stately buildings, its legends, and its monastic memories. The Godiva pageants were celebrated in Shakespeare's day, and are kept up even yet. The ancient Mysteries, though already distanced far in a dramatic evolution that the man from Stratford was to complete, were still rendered just as of old. When

Coventry.

Shakespeare was sixteen, in 1580, these plays were virtually suppressed; but it is conceivable that he was enterprising enough before that age to have found his way, with or without tutelage, to the famous spectacles. His references to Termagant and Herod seem to come from no second-hand acquaintance with those blusterous, raging characters from the Mysteries. Five miles nearer Stratford were the town and castle of Kenilworth, where Leicester had been installed by the Queen's favour in the year of Shakespeare's birth. The magnificence of such a figure, who aspired even to the hand of his sovereign, could not have failed to quicken the slowest bucolic fancy in days like those. Surely the splendour of the masques and sports with which Leicester entertained the Queen, in the summer of 1575, for seventeen days, must have reached the mind of Shakespeare, and lifted it to the level of princely contemplation. It is indeed far from likely that John Shakespeare shut himself up in Stratford throughout this festival, and deprived himself, his wife, and his son from witnessing some part of pageants hardly to be matched in Christendom. On the same highway, five miles nearer home, stood Warwick, with its memorials and memories of great men. The commoner sort of people throughout the shire must have known the story of Earl Thomas, who led the English knights at Cressy, and were perhaps talking with unabated wonder yet of the great Richard who made and unmade kings at will. The country abounded in scenes and

Kenilworth.

Warwick.

monuments that spoke eloquently of the past, from battle grounds and feudal castles to parish churches and Ichnield Street. To a mind like Shakespeare's all legends and reminders of this sort must have been significant and inspiring.

The Free Grammar School of Stratford.

For such endowments and possibilities as were Shakespeare's, something of education was a vital need. There was already, as by marvel, a school in waiting. While Mary Arden could not read, nor John Shakespeare do much more perhaps than write his name, it was possible for their son to know the best things, in kind, that England then gave to her youth of privilege. As early as 1482 Thomas Jolyffe had granted the foundation for the Free Grammar School of Stratford. The conditions were that the Guild of the Holy Cross, which controlled the lands and houses, should maintain a priest 'fit and able in knowledge to teach grammar freely to all scholars coming to the school in the said town to him.' After the Reformation, which dissolved of course the Guild, the revenues were rescued and reapplied by a charter of Edward VI. The school founded and made available thus for Shakespeare has not ceased yet its work. The Guild Hall and Grammar School, on Church Street of Old Stratford, stands as it did, joined at an angle greater than a right angle with the Guild Chapel, which extended along Chapel Lane. The schoolroom, which was in the second story, measured sixty-eight feet by twenty-two, and had beams overhead in lieu of ceiling. The Guild Chapel (84 x 25) was somewhat larger.

It is by no means certain that Shakespeare was ever at school in the room over the town hall, just described. There is an entry in the corporation books of March 5, 1595, to the effect that 'there shall be no school kept in the Chapel from this time following.' It seems likely that the work of the school, begun perhaps after Edward's charter in the Chapel of the Guild, was changed at that date to the room now used. It is more than probable that Shakespeare was a pupil in this school in 1571, or a little later. Walter Roche was then master, and was succeeded by Thomas Hunt six years after. One or the other of these, or perhaps both, must have given Shakespeare instruction. Latin was certainly administered to him, and almost as certainly through the medium of Lily's Grammar; and he may have read something from Plautus, Terence, and Horace, as well as Cicero and Vergil. There is no evidence that Greek was taught in Stratford at this time, or that Shakespeare studied it there or elsewhere.

What Shakespeare studied.

Thus the son of the wool-dealer in Henley Street reached an acquaintance with the Latin element in English, without which he could not have become Shakespeare to the world. To have known Greek might have increased his power; not to have known Latin would have given him a diction wanting in universalness, and shorn of literary strength. With it he has surpassed all other wielders of the English tongue. He has profited by Latin idioms for terseness and potencies

Shakespeare's diction.

not otherwise in reach. His taste was sometimes faulty, because the taste of the day was yet imperfect. But he often effects a classic turn that for neatness and certitude puts the pedants to confusion. Shakespeare's knowledge of French and Italian, for he seems to have had some first-hand acquaintance with both these languages, must have been derived from later study.

How long Shakespeare's school days lasted, there is no means of knowing. In 1577 his father's prosperity began to wane. This circumstance is believed to have sent the lad to his first work as a wage-earner. There are other hints and scraps of evidence that the poet began to learn something of the serious side of life at about this time. His father's fortunes refused to mend. In the autumn of 1578 he was forced to secure a loan of £40, something like £320, or $1600 of present money, by mortgaging his wife's estate at Asbies. In the next year his daughter Anne died. All references and records concerning him in the next ten years tell of little else than distress and humiliation, and even pursuit, because of creditors. In 1592 John Shakespeare is reported, with eight others, 'for not coming monthly to church according to her majesty's laws,' the reason being not Popish recusancy, but fear of process for debt. During this period it may be fairly assumed that the eldest son aided in the support of the family; but whether he served as a butcher, a lawyer's clerk, or a country schoolmaster, as has been variously maintained, there is no evidence to determine.

However much the younger Shakespeare may have helped his mother in the cares and burdens of her household, on the first coming of evil days, it seems clear that this aid was not increased with the apparently increasing needs. After 1582 we find him weighted with domestic burdens of his own; the stripling Shakespeare, not yet nineteen, has made himself a husband. The story is scarcely pleasing, and involves some mysteries. In Shottery, according to the records, there were three families bearing the name of Hathaway. The head of one of these, known as Richard, made in 1581 a will, and by one provision of it left the sum of £6, 13*s.*, 4*d.* to a daughter Agnes, to be paid to her on the day of her marriage. This Richard Hathaway is identified as the farmer who owned and lived in the house, now considerably reduced and altered, which is shown as Anne Hathaway's cottage. Agnes and Anne were often treated as variants of the same name. As had happened in Robert Arden's family, there was a marriage soon after the father's death; for the Stratford register shows the birth of a daughter Susanna to William Shakespeare on the 26th of May, 1583. No record of the marriage of Anne Hathaway to William Shakespeare seems to be anywhere extant. But in the consistorial court of Worcester there is a document which proves that the marriage was licensed unusually and could not have taken place earlier than November 28, preceding the date of the document in question. By this instrument, Fulk Sandells and John Richardson, husband-

Shakespeare's marriage.

men of Stratford, assume suretyship in the sum of £40, that no damage shall accrue to the Bishop of Worcester in consequence of licensing the marriage of William Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway on once asking of the bans. According to the inscription on Anne Shakespeare's tombstone, she had reached at this time the age of twenty-six. Under date of February 2, 1585, we find entered in the Stratford register the birth of Hamnet and Judith Shakespeare, twins.

There were other William Shakespeares in the see of Worcester, to which the Stratford parishes belonged, at this time; and another of these Williams secured a license at the bishop's court, in the same fashion, on November 27, to marry a certain Anne Whately, from near Stratford. There cannot be question which William Shakespeare became afterward the great playwright. Fulk Sandells and John Richardson seem not to have been representatives of the bridegroom, who was perhaps with them, but of the family of the bride. Sandells is mentioned in her father's will as a 'trustie frende and neighbour,' and Richardson was probably the John Richardson who, with his mark, witnessed the will. In a bond of the sort executed by these men, the consent of the parents or 'frendes' of the groom as well as of the bride was requisite, but in this one no reference to Shakespeare's family appears. As the groom was a minor, the omission is the more remarkable. Shakespeare himself, as has been said, may have been present and able to assure the bishop's officer, or John

Shakespeare may have been of the party and testified to his willingness in person. Shakespeare's father, being at this time in financial straits, would not be expected to add his name to the bond, while Sandells and Richardson for their part would scarcely wish to assume suretyship in his behalf. An instrument of this one-sided character would be recognised by any clergyman acquainted with both contracting parties and their families, and such a clergyman undoubtedly performed the ceremony. It has been conjectured, it would seem with no great unwillingness, by writers affecting to regard the great interpreter and worshipper of womanhood as no better than the commonest of men, that Shakespeare did not marry Anne Hathaway save by compulsion. Nothing is clearer than that Shakespeare could have avoided this union had he so willed. There were cases enough in Stratford, if the birth records are to be trusted, of men who ought to have been husbands, but had escaped becoming such. There is small reason for assuming that Shakespeare was less adventurous and resourceful, whether or not he were better in ideals and morals, than these young townsmen. There is evidence, moreover, that the marriages of those days were almost always preceded by a more or less formal contract, which had all the legal force of a marriage proper. This was generally followed by the priestly ceremonial, though sometimes after much delay. Robert Arden mentions his daughter Agnes, in a certain instrument, as the 'wife' of Thomas

A pre-contract of marriage.

Stringer, although we know that the religious marriage was not solemnised until fully three months after the date borne by the document. In Bishop Watson's *Doctrine of the Seven Sacraments*, published in 1558, it is observed that persons united by pre-contract are 'perfectly married together'; while 'the marriage of them in the face of the Church afterward, by the ministration of the priest, is not superfluous, but much expedient for sundry causes.' The sense of the times in such matters seems to have been recognised by Shakespeare in two of the plays considered in the present volume. In *The Winter's Tale* he appears to have thought a pre-contract necessary, and sufficient, for Perdita and Florizel, before their journey to Sicily together. By like means, he secures to Olivia, in *Twelfth Night*, legal authority over the wavering affections, as she supposes, of the Duke's messenger (*cf.* p. 405). That there was a pre-contract in the instance in question must not be affirmed, nor indeed denied; neither is it charity or good morals to insist that, where conditions of honourable union were so easy, there was deliberate wrong. Whatever, as regards Anne Hathaway, the case may mean, the burden of proof is against those who assume or affirm that Shakespeare was not in all the affair wholly chivalrous and noble.

The deer-stealing episode.

After this marriage, the page is blank again. Whether Shakespeare lived with his parents in Henley Street, or whether he was able already to maintain a home of his own, there is not so much as a hint in knowledge. We can

be sure of nothing further than that, after the birth of Hamnet and Judith, in February, 1585, Shakespeare went to London. It is hardly possible that he went earlier than this year, or that his going was much more than a year later. There is a tradition that his departure was hastened by the persecutions of Sir Thomas Lucy, living at the hall in Charlcote, some four miles east of Stratford, on the Avon. Sir Thomas was a member of Parliament, an ex-high sheriff and a justice of the peace, and pursued Shakespeare, according to the story, for repeatedly breaking into his park enclosures and stealing his deer. There is no unlikelihood that Shakespeare had some part in the deer-stealing. That was a common enough offence against the gentry, and was looked upon as no worse morally, as some one has said, than the melon-stealing of a later day. When a man from such a community becomes great, popular report concerning him, at least for a generation or two, is apt to be correct. One item in the tradition, to the effect that Shakespeare avenged himself by lampooning his pursuer, is significant and invites acceptance of the whole. Shakespeare would be altogether likely to use the weapons that we know he had. The alleged first stanza of his pasquinade, remembered and contributed by an old resident, and containing puns on the family name, is extant, and can hardly be accounted for as a bucolic fabrication. Shakespeare seems to have cherished no lasting fondness for the Lucys, and probably by the character of Justice Shallow, in *Merry*

Sir Thomas Lucy as Justice Shallow.

*Wives*, gives some further expression to his satiric feeling. This play, at opening, presents Shallow threatening to make a star-chamber matter of a certain culprit's poaching. Immediate reference is then made to his rank and pedigree and coat of arms. The Lucy coat showed three luces, or pikes, *argent*. In Justice Shallow's coat this number is increased to twelve, and Sir Hugh Evans is made presently (I. i. 19, 20) to affirm that 'the dozen white louses do become an old coat well.' There can be small doubt that we have here an echo of the old feud and the old joke.

What Shakespeare did when he arrived in London, or what he expected to do on reaching there, are little better than matters of conjecture. It is possible that he went on purpose to join some company of players, for he had undoubtedly seen several such perform at Stratford, and been quickened by their appeal to the imaginative life. Sir William Davenant, who affected to know more about Shakespeare's private history than anybody else, is said to be authority for the statement that he worked first before The Theatre in Shoreditch, holding horses for the gentry who frequented there. This playhouse, which had been running since 1577, was owned by the father of Richard Burbage, the great tragic actor of later days. The Curtain, which was the only English playhouse as yet in existence, besides The Theatre, was situated near it, and had perhaps been in operation almost as long. In one of these, certainly, Shakespeare soon found employment. In 1587 Shakespeare's name appears in conjunction

with his father's in an effort to make over the title of the Asbies estate to John Lambert, on condition of receiving from Lambert £20. It is believed that this attempted transfer, which belongs to September of the year named, drew Shakespeare home to Stratford.

For the next five years the record of Shakespeare's life is without entries. In 1592 his name appears under circumstances that argue a marked change in his condition. He is grown to be of importance enough to have excited the jealousy of one of the first playwrights of the day, a Cambridge graduate, widely travelled and of unusual accomplishments, and to have suffered from him a bitter personal attack. Robert Greene, once in orders, and now at the end of his career as a dramatist and poet, writes of him thus in his *Groats-worth of Wit Bought with a Million of Repentaunce:* 'There is an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that, with his *Tygers heart wrapt in a Players hide*, supposes he is as well able to bumbast out a blanke verse as the best of you; and being an absolute *Johannes Factotum*, is in his own conceit the onely Shake-scene in a countrie. O that I might intreate your rare wits to be imployed in more profitable courses, and let those apes imitate your past excellence, and never more acquaint them with your admired inventions! I know the best husband of you all will never prove an usurer, and the kindest of them all wil never proove a kinde nurse; yet, whilst you may, seeke you better maisters, for it is pittie men of such rare

The attack of Greene.

wits should be subject to the pleasures of such rude groomes.' The death-bed warning, of which these sentences form a part, is addressed to three fellow-dramatists, presumably Marlowe and Nash and Lodge, who are exhorted to mend all their evil ways as well as to refrain from play-making henceforward. Of the italicised expressions, which are printed as they appear in the pamphlet, the first is plainly burlesqued from this line (I. iv. 137) in the *Third Part of Henry VI*, —

> O tiger's heart wrapt in a woman's hide.

The play just named is one of those that Shakespeare is known to have revised, and may have been originally in part the work of Greene. From the part of the pamphlet quoted, it is evident that Shakespeare is now an actor, and that he has been looked upon hitherto as not at all belonging to the class of persons that should presume to write blank verse or recast a play. How brilliantly he has done work of this 'Johannes factotum' sort we may read in the rancour of a dying man, who is trying to exhibit a Christian spirit. It is known that, in February of this year, the company of players to which Shakespeare belonged had opened a third playhouse, called 'The Rose.' It seems to have been in consequence of new demands originating here that Shakespeare's powers were first called to use.

The abuse thus publicly administered to Shakespeare might have been, by an untutored, bucolic 'groom,' not altogether undeserved. There is evi-

dence, however, that it was quite uncalled for, and that Shakespeare was recognised already as a man not only of rare cleverness, but of signally courteous and upright behaviour. Greene's pamphlet, finished but a little before his death, was put into the hands of one Henry Chettle, who edited it and saw it through the press. Three months later, Chettle published a little book of his own, called *Kind-Harts Dreame*, and in the introduction to this he apologises for allowing Greene's abuse to see the light. "How I," he writes, "have all the time of my conversing in printing hindred the bitter inveying against schollers, it hath been very well knowne; and how in that I dealt, I can sufficiently proove. With neither of them that take offence was I acquainted, and with one of them I care not if I never be. Tho other, whome at that time I did not so much spare as since I wish I had, for that, as I have moderated the heate of living writers, and might have usde my owne discretion, — especially in such a case, the author beeing dead, — that I did not I am as sory as if the originall fault had beene my fault, because myselfe have seene his demeanor no lesse civill, than he exelent in the qualitie he professes; — besides, divers of worship have reported his uprightnes of dealing, which argues his honesty, and his facetious grace in writting, that aprooves his art." This is a good report of the man who came to London six years ago. The persons 'of worship' who have testified to Shakespeare's uprightness of dealing, are pretty surely not his employers

Henry Chettle's apology.

or companions in the theatre; he has made friends among folk of rank and influence in the city. He has the manners and bearing of a gentleman, and is as conspicuous in such accomplishments as he is excellent in his 'quality' or profession as an actor. Moreover, his facility and grace in writing seem to have been recognised already, by his patrons and admirers, as remarkable, in spite of Marlowe and Greene and Peele, with all their learning and prestige. Though Shakespeare has entered this brilliant and fascinating circle of playwrights and players under circumstances that tend most subtly and strongly to undermine his character, he keeps his head, and is advancing rapidly to the front.

Chettle's reference to Shakespeare as of recognised eminence in the work of acting squares well with what is known of his prominence in the company in which he played. According to an act of Parliament, passed in the Ferrex and Porrex period of British stage history, when acting had come to be a specific occupation, all troupes of players were obliged to appear under the patronage of some nobleman or person of great influence and following at court. The company toward which Shakespeare seems to have been attracted was naturally enough the one licensed by the Earl of Leicester. Afterward this company came under the protection of the Lord Chamberlain, and in 1603 of no less a personage than King James. It is of record that the Lord Chamberlain's Company played two comedies before Queen Elizabeth, in December, 1594, but only Kemp and

Shakespeare and Burbage are named specifically. Kemp was the first among the comedy actors of this time, as Burbage was first among tragedians. If Shakespeare were named here because he is a playwright, he would be entered probably before Kemp. If he were but a sorry actor of comedy, he would surely stand after Burbage, or not appear at all. Among nine of the actors in the King's Company, mentioned in James's license, Shakespeare again is second, being preceded by Lawrence Fletcher, and followed by Richard Burbage. The provisions of the license are extended, beyond the nine actors named, 'to the rest of their associates'; which would imply some dozen or fifteen as the full membership of the company. In the list of players who took part in the first presentation of Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*, Shakespeare stands at the head; and among the players that appear in the first edition of *Sejanus*, by the same author, Shakespeare and Burbage rank alike. Moreover, in a list of the 'principal' actors of Shakespeare's plays, prefixed to the Folio of 1623, Shakespeare's is the first of twenty-six names, with Burbage following. Shakespeare's dramatic greatness probably accounts for his name being the first one in the list, but does not account for his name being in the list. If he had not been an unusually good actor, the playhouse brotherhood, which was jealous of the interests of each member, and fixed the degrees of merit, would presumably not have suffered his being ranked as on a par with Burbage.

Shakespeare as an actor.

That Shakespeare became a successful actor in the theatre of Elizabethan times must mean that he was of good presence and figure, and that he was sprightly and graceful of manner. He can hardly be thought of as actually rivalling the strongest type of players, — for there were giants in those days, — mainly perhaps on account of voice, which may have lacked the timbre essential to heroic parts. There is no suggestion of effeminacy about Shakespeare; but his kindliness and sympathy toward children and women scarcely argue the brawn and weight of a Burbage personality. There are traditions that he played the Ghost in *Hamlet* and Adam in *As You Like It*, rôles evidently within the vocal limits of the man supposed. It is probable that Shakespeare was at his best in some main parts of the comedy series, as Benedict, Petruchio, Antonio, Shylock, Jaques, though we can agreeably conceive him his own best Romeo, Mercutio, Horatio, Posthumus, Menenius, Philip Faulconbridge, and Enobarbus, and many other such characters in the histories and tragedies. He is mentioned once in an epigram, by John Davies of Hereford, as a 'player of kingly parts in sport.' It goes without saying that Shakespeare comprehended the rôles that he created better than the actors whom he set and coached to carry them respectively; and that, except for histrionic limitations, he could have taken the several parts himself better than anybody else. It is at least significant that he continued in the quality of an actor, in spite of his

Shakespeare's rôles.

princely income, and the exactions of playwriting and management, till the full close of his dramatic career.

It is not to be supposed that Shakespeare worked for any length of time at mending plays before discovering that he could make good ones for himself. Yet if his own statement is to be taken seriously, it was not a drama that received his first constructive effort. Near the middle of 1593 appeared his *Venus and Adonis*, declared in the dedication to Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, to be 'the first heir of his invention.' The author of this venture has manifestly learned the ways of the world, and conceived some confidence in his ability to please one of the richest and most accomplished young noblemen of the whole kingdom. Southampton was understood to have no especial antipathy to poems of an amatory nature, and this may account for something in the product not wholly to the author's mind. 'I know not,' he says, 'how I shall offend in dedicating my vnpolisht lines to your Lordship, nor how the worlde will censure mee for choosing so strong a proppe to support so weake a burthen, onelye if your Honour seeme but pleased, I account myselfe highly praised, and vowe to take aduantage of all idle houres, till I haue honoured you with some grauer labour.' Shakespeare seems to have guessed well what the public, if not his patron, wanted, and seven editions were called for in hardly more than as many years. The *Venus* is not only an interpretation, with considerable Renaissance freedom, of the

*Venus and Adonis.*

Goddess consciousness on its human side toward a Galahad ideal of the Greek mind; it is no less a study of that ideal itself. This second feature seems, not perhaps inexplicably, to have been generally overlooked. In consequence Shakespeare has been credited with the baser and not the better motive of the theme. It is at least the only time that this author may be claimed to have made to himself friends of the somewhat erotic license of the day. It was a sure path to public favour, but Shakespeare avoided it ever after.

*Lucrece.*

In the next year the graver labour promised by Shakespeare to his patron was brought out by the same printer under the title of *Lucrece.* Though like the *Venus* essentially in form and measure, it was in spirit and purpose a very different piece of work. It is a study in the sentiments of a wronged woman, whose integrity and greatness of soul subordinate her plight, and whose womanly devotion rises to the strength of passion, and merges all willingness to live. Those who bought the *Lucrece* to gratify a salacious craving, found themselves pervaded by very different influences, and wholly such as were wrought by the Juliet, and Hermione, and Imogen of later years. Tarquin, the counterpart study here, though handled with a potent moral purpose, has been as much ignored as the secondary figure in the earlier piece. There is no such repression or repose in these poems as we find in *Cymbeline* and *The Winter's Tale;* but there are the same clairvoyance and the same sympathy, in full develop-

ment, that have made Shakespeare in other works the world's interpreter of woman to her sex. Both these poems are luxuriant and crude, and betray the shadow of the workman upon his work. But there are withal a fertility of phrase, a sureness of conception and of stroke, and a sturdy defeat of all restraints of rhyme and meter, that proclaim the present mastery of the author's mind. The new poem was naturally dedicated to the same patron, who is reputed to have furnished Shakespeare with a very substantial indorsement of the work. But the story, as told by Davenant, that he gave the poet £1000, while not incredible, is most likely an exaggeration. Indeed, were it not for the fact that Shakespeare is soon found investing considerable money in his home town, and that Southampton is talked of there generally as having supplied it, we might dismiss the item as wholly mythical.

In 1593 the theatres, we are told, were closed on account of the plague, and Shakespeare's leisure for authorship may have been in consequence more ample. In the winter of this year the tragedy of *Titus Andronicus*, at least in part the work of Shakespeare, was presented with great success. This play, though impracticable and repellent enough, by present standards, is known to have been thoroughly acceptable to the theatre-going public of the day. Nothing was seemingly too bloody and sensational for the general taste. This is a fact to be remembered in evaluating Shakespeare's popularity and influence with later plays, and his service

The public taste.

to the stage in making them different from the accepted models. An edition of the play just named was printed in 1594; but whether it was identical with the Quarto issued in 1600, and essentially our present text, cannot be shown. In December of 1594 Shakespeare played before the Queen at Greenwich, as has been noted, in two comedies, and at this time, probably as actor rather than author, won her admiration. On the evening of Innocents' Day, December 28, a play was rendered at Gray's Inn which is confidently believed to have been *The Comedy of Errors*. Other plays, as *King John*, *Richard II*, and *Richard III*, are referred to this year or to the one succeeding.

There can be little doubt that Shakespeare worked industriously at play-making in 1595. Several pieces that cannot be assigned to the later dates must have taken shape within the year. Shakespeare is now easily the first figure in dramatic authorship. Marlowe, who seems to have been for a time his teacher, but whose ambitious and blustering manner he has outgrown, has been dead two years. Lyly and Greene and Peele are as good as obsolete. There is yet much of development to be compassed, at least in form. His lines are end-stopped, as well as harsh sometimes and forced. But his observation, his wit, his vision, seem perfect now. He has grown-up confidence, too, in life and truth as the sole basis of dramatic endeavour and success. If he has ever been timorous or discouraged, his days of doubt must have some time since passed away. In 1596 we find evidence that the *Romeo and Juliet* was

*Romeo and Juliet.*

brought out at The Curtain, and with unexampled favour. It seems to have made its author the lion of society, and the most distinguished poet as well as dramatist in the kingdom.

In August of this year Hamnet, son of the poet, died at Stratford, and was buried there. No syllable of evidence exists concerning the lad's promise, or his father's hopes or grief. There are many indications that Shakespeare's prosperity and popularity are beginning to reach his native borough. He seems to have released his father from debt, and to have established him beyond the necessity of meddling further with the uncertainties of trade. There is evidence that John Shakespeare had taken steps, some time before October of the same year, to secure a coat of arms from the Heralds' College. The application was not honoured until further effort, three years later, in 1599. But it is significant that the man who, as late as 1592, had been reported for non-attendance at church from fear of bailiffs, was now seeking a distinction that few citizens of Stratford had enjoyed. The expense of securing the honour was certainly not borne by him. In the spring of 1597 Shakespeare bought the great house, built by Sir Hugh Clopton before 1500, and with it grounds of nearly an acre in extent. This estate, known as New Place, was situated at the corner of Church Street and Chapel Lane, just across the latter from Guild Chapel. The house, though built substantially of brick, and with more prospect of permanency than any dwelling besides in

Grant of coat armour.

New Place.

Stratford, is not in existence now, having been taken down at the close of the seventeenth century. The buildings and grounds had not been well cared for, and Shakespeare paid for the property but £60. That some or all of the purchase money came from the donative of Southampton to Shakespeare, is a tradition, and may be true.

The year 1597 is an important one in the poet's history. It is not clear that the substantial, book-buying public had been much reached by his popularity hitherto. But now certainly the cultivated people of the city were clamouring for the *Romeo and Juliet* in printed form. That the demand was urgent, seems clear from the fact that two fonts of type were used to set up the work. This first printing did not, however, give the public an authentic text, but a patchwork substitute, made up apparently from short-hand notes and remembered passages. The owners of copyright plays were not likely to encourage the circulation of their property as literature, and would undoubtedly have suppressed all attempts of this kind, if legal measures could have been used as effectually as now. *Richard II* and *Richard III*, the latter always a popular play, were issued in quarto form this year. Thus was the foundation of Shakespeare's fame as a poet and literary master securely laid. Before the close of 1597 the records show that John and Mary Shakespeare entered suit in Chancery against John Lambert for the recovery of Asbies, another proof that means as well as courage had come back to the elder Shakespeares at

Quarto of *Romeo and Juliet.*

Stratford. Meanwhile, the multiplication of plays went on. At Christmas it is known that *Love's Labour's Lost* was performed before Elizabeth at Whitehall. Shakespeare's receipts must have by this time become considerable. The lowest sum received for a play was hardly less than $250 of present money, and might be almost twice as much. Shakespeare's dramas, we may be sure, brought as high a price as anybody's. His salary as an actor, with perquisites and gifts, has been estimated as not less than $4000 a year. Two or three years later, after he becomes a partner in theatrical management, his income will be four or five times as much. His means have been at every point sufficient to account for the prosperity and the transactions of which we know. *The First Part of King Henry Fourth* belongs probably to this year, 1597, since it is entered in the Stationer's Register in 1598. *The Merchant of Venice* followed it in the year last named.

Shakespeare's income.

In 1598 begins Shakespeare's professional association with Ben Jonson, who has furnished us with the largest and best part of our knowledge concerning him as a man. Jonson possessed considerable learning of the kind fostered in those days, and had perhaps somewhat earlier essayed stage work. He sadly lacked the tact and touch requisite for success with a public almost wholly in sympathy with Shakespeare's school. Jonson, according to Rowe's account, had brought to Shakespeare's company one of his plays, 'in order

Ben Jonson.

to have it acted; and the persons into whose hands it was put, after having turn'd it carelessly and superciliously over, were just upon returning it to him with an ill-natur'd answer that it would be of no service to their company, when Shakespear luckily cast his eye upon it, and found something so well in it as to engage him first to read it through, and afterwards to recommend Mr. Jonson and his writings to the publick.' This piece, which was undoubtedly *Every Man in his Humour*, was brought out, as we have seen, with Shakespeare in the cast, and was successful. It was at best but an indifferent play, as judged by the standards of the company, and the kindness with which Shakespeare commended it to the public, if he did commend it, cannot but be held symptomatic of his mind. There was no reason, except from outside his eminence as a playwright, that could have prompted him to regard the piece differently from the other players who turned it carelessly and superciliously over. 'After this,' Rowe says, 'they were profess'd friends; tho' I don't know whether the other ever made him an equal return of gentleness and sincerity. Ben was naturally proud and insolent, and, in the days of his reputation, did so far take upon him the supremacy in wit, that he could not but look with an evil eye upon any one that seem'd to stand in competition with him.' Jonson's own testimony, written perhaps twenty years after the death of Shakespeare, is not less strong: 'I lov'd the man, and doe honour his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any. Hee was, indeed, honest, and of an

open and free nature; had an excellent phantsie; brave notions and gentle expressions; wherein hee flow'd with that facility that sometime it was necessary he should be stop'd.' These sentences are preceded and followed by certain qualifications regarding his taste and style, which will be given later. A more extended and perhaps better-considered eulogium, beginning,—

> *To draw no enuy* (Shakespeare) *on thy name,*
> *Am I thus ample to thy Booke, and Fame:*
> *While I confesse thy writings to be such,*
> *As neither* Man, *nor* Muse, *can praise too much,*—

was contributed by him to the Folio edition of Shakespeare published in 1623.

Further testimony as to the esteem in which Shakespeare's work has come to be regarded dates from this year. In the same month in which Shakespeare was helping bring out Ben Jonson's comedy, Francis Meres's *Palladis Tamia* appeared. In this the author, who was a man of learning, makes a summary of literary names, classical and English, associating Shakespeare with authors greatly his inferior, and praising all indiscriminately. 'As the Greeke tongue,' he says, 'is made famous and eloquent by Homer, Hesiod, Euripedes, Æschilus, Sophocles, Pindarus, Phocylides, and Aristophanes; and the Latine tongue by Virgill, Ovid, Horace, Silius Italicus, Lucanus, Lucretius, Ausonius, and Claudianus; so the English tongue is mightily enriched and gorgeouslie invested, in rare ornaments and resplendent abiliments, by Sir Philip Sidney, Spencer, Daniel, Dray-

*Palladis Tamia.*

ton, Warner, Shakespeare, Marlow, and Chapman.' In another connection he mentions, as best for tragedy, 'Lorde Buckhurst, Doctor Leg of Cambridge, Doctor Edes of Oxforde, maister Edward Ferris, the authour of the Mirrour for Magistrates, Marlow, Peele, Watson, Kid, Shakespeare, Drayton, Chapman, Decker, and Benjamin Johnson'; and as 'the best for comedy amongst us' he includes Shakespeare as the ninth in a list of seventeen names. But the judgments of Meres in the book at large are redeemed by two sentences, in which he treats of Shakespeare by himself. 'As the soule of Euphorbus,' he says, 'was thought to live in Pythagoras, so the sweete wittie soule of Ovid lives in mellifluous and hony-tongued Shakespeare; witnes his Venus and Adonis, his Lucrece, his sugred Sonnets among his private friends, &c. — As Plautus and Seneca are accounted the best for comedy and tragedy among the Latines, so Shakespeare among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage; for comedy, witnes his Gentlemen of Verona, his Errors, his Love labors lost, his Love labours wonne, his Midsummers night dreame, and his Merchant of Venice; for tragedy, his Richard the Second, Richard the Third, Henry the Fourth, King John, Titus Andronicus and his Romeo and Juliet.' This list of pieces is probably complete up to the date of writing, though the circumstance that the number of extant plays in tragedy is reported as exactly the same as of extant plays in comedy is not assuring. It is not likely that Shakespeare consciously attempted to

keep the balance even. It will have been likewise noted that Jonson is mentioned as already, in tragedy, an author of reputation. But it may be possible, as some one has suggested, that Jonson was known, 'among his private friends,' of whom Meres seems to have been one, before the acceptance of his work by the companies, as a writer of classic stage plays. The comedy of Shakespeare referred to by the title *Love's Labour's Won* may have been one of the many Elizabethan pieces that have perished, but probably exists under the name of *All's Well that Ends Well.* There is small reason for believing that any drama which Shakespeare had any material share in making has been permitted to disappear.

After 1599 Shakespeare was able to derive income from other sources than acting and writing plays. The Theatre was taken down, and from the materials, which were removed to Southwark, near London Bridge, the Globe Theatre was in part constructed. The new playhouse was rather a large affair, accommodating it is inferred as many as two thousand patrons. Its name, The Globe, was derived from its sign — shops and like public places being designated not by street numbers but 'signs' — of Atlas with the world upon his shoulders. Shakespeare and other actors were the lessees. What income per share was derived from the management is not known, but it probably ranged from £100 to £200 in money of the time. This year appears to have been also an active one in authorship; Shakespeare seems to have produced *Henry V* and

Globe Theatre.

*Much Ado* before its close. There is a tradition that Elizabeth, on account of a particular liking for the part of Falstaff in *Henry IV*, requested Shakespeare to make a play showing that character in love, and that Shakespeare complied, writing the *Merry Wives* in fourteen days. We have seen that Sir Thomas Lucy, who died in 1600, is probably satirised in this drama. Shakespeare almost certainly would not wait till the death of his former persecutor before pillorying him in a play. The correct text of *Romeo and Juliet* was issued this year in a new quarto.

*Merry Wives of Windsor.*

In 1600 it is believed that Shakespeare brought out his *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It*, which, with *Much Ado*, rank as his three best comedies. These pieces certainly, in point of dramatic and poetic excellence, belong together. In the rebellion of 1601 Shakespeare's company was professionally implicated, having been hired to render a play that is supposed to have been *Richard II.* Shakespeare does not seem to have lost favour in consequence with the Queen, as his company is shown to have played before her Majesty at Richmond palace a few weeks later. In September of this year John Shakespeare died. During the winter, in a play called *The Scourge of Simony*, acted by the students in St. John's College, Cambridge, Shakespeare received recognition of a novel kind. Burbage and Kemp, the chief players of the day, are introduced as having come to Cambridge to instruct the students in acting. Kemp is made to remark to Burbage thus: 'Few of the uni-

versity pen plaies well: they smell too much of that writer Ovid, and that writer Metamorphosis, and talke too much of Proserpina and Jupiter. Why, heres our fellow Shakespeare puts them all downe, I, and Ben Jonson too. O that Ben Jonson is a pestilent fellow! he brought up Horace giving the poets a pill, but our fellow Shakespeare hath given him a purge that made him beray his credit.' This play was printed five years later, under *The Returne from Pernassus* as its first title. In May of the year following Shakespeare is recorded as the purchaser of a hundred and seven acres of land near Stratford, for which the payment of £320 was made. Shakespeare is unable to leave London to consummate the transfer, and the conveyance is sealed and delivered to Gilbert Shakespeare as his proxy. Sometime in the spring of this year *Hamlet* was brought out at the Globe Theatre.

*The Returne from Pernassus.*

*Hamlet.*

In 1603, on the death of Elizabeth, and the accession of James I, Shakespeare's company was at once licensed as the King's Players, Shakespeare ranking second in the list, with Burbage third. *Hamlet* was issued in the first quarto, clearly a pirated edition. It was followed in 1604 by the second quarto, in authorised text, 'enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie.' Other plays not more popular than this one, but in general estimation greater, followed in sublime succession. It is the heyday of Shakespeare's skill and power. Here belong somewhat unassignably by years *Othello*,

Shakespeare's mature period.

*Macbeth*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Coriolanus* and *King Lear*, with *Measure for Measure*, *Timon of Athens*, and *Pericles*, *Prince of Tyre*. Any one of these, save the last three, would have sufficed to make a dramatist immortal. Meantime changes were coming, or had come. In spite of heavy preoccupations, Shakespeare is turning his thoughts toward Stratford. In 1605 he is purchaser of the tithes of Stratford, Old Stratford, Welcombe, and Bishopton, paying £440 for the rights secured. While he is doing the hardest literary work of his life, his mind seems most engaged with business details, and the purchase of the tithes entailed no little trouble. In the summer of 1607 Shakespeare's first-born, Susanna, was married to John Hall, a physician of Stratford. In December of that year Edmund Shakespeare, the poet's brother, was buried from the Church of St. Saviour in Southwark. He is known to have been an actor, presumably in his brother's company; and the time of his burial, which was in the morning, would seem chosen that his fellow-actors might attend the services. On the 9th of September, 1608, Mary Arden, Shakespeare's mother, died.

Shakespeare did not suffer in his dramatic rights alone from the cupidity of unprincipled publishers. Early in 1609 a little quarto, entitled *Shake-speares Sonnets neuer before imprinted*, was carried through the press by Thomas Thorpe. This man had in some way secured a manuscript copy of Shakespeare's 'sugared sonnets among his private friends,' and, assuming that the author's dramatic

The *Sonnets*.

prestige would sell the work, issued an edition of it. It does not appear that the venture was especially successful. In 1591 Sir Philip Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* had been published under similar circumstances, and introduced a fashion of sonneteering that lasted fully half-a-dozen years. There seems no question that the sonnets in the book throughout are Shakespeare's, but it is pretty certain that they date almost wholly from the *Venus* and *Lucrece* period of his authorship. It is manifest, besides, that many of the sonnets have covert references to Southampton, as still the patron of their author. Nearly all of the poems, which are sentimental and literary, rather than utterances of genuine feeling, are amatory, following the conventions of the time. Meres, enumerating further in his *Palladis Tamia*, had spoken thus of the school: 'These are the most passionate among us to bewaile and bemoane the perplexities of Love, — Henrie Howard, earle of Surrey, Sir Thomas Wyat the elder, Sir Francis Brian, Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Walter Rawley, Sir Edward Dyer, Spencer, Daniel, Drayton, Shakespeare, Whetstone, Gascoyne, Samuell Page, sometimes fellowe of Corpus Christi Colledge in Oxford, Churchyard, Bretton.' The fashion of Petrarch's tributes to Laura, as imitated in English first by Wyatt and Surrey, had been extended to masculine favourites, and with about as much subtlety and subjectivity as to the real or imaginary mistresses that they sung.

The major part of the sonnets in this case deal with a man, for whom the author professes a fondness and

devotion surpassing the love of women. Were it established that Shakespeare ever experienced such an affection as is here affirmed for any man, we should have new matter by which to evaluate his nature. But it is impossible to sequestrate the subjective element. From the language of certain sonnets it has been inferred that the worshipped lover's name was Will. Whether there was ever any single person specifically and consistently in the poet's mind cannot be known; but if there was, and of the rank and culture that the sonnets imply, it is as good as demonstrable that he did not bear this name. As for the other chief figure, the dark lady, with whom the last twenty-eight sonnets are concerned, there are unconventional allusions and compliments of a kind that argue a substantial basis of fact beneath the poetry. It is not unlikely that Shakespeare, on first entering the great world of wit and fashion, came under the spell of a brilliant but unprincipled woman, connected, perhaps, with the court, or certainly with the highest social circles. There were few men in that age incapable of responding to the blandishments of such a social figure. Being himself handsome and fascinating, as we must assume, and of a temperament and spirit especially attractive to the sex that he knew so well, he could hardly have escaped the attentions of self-willed women. The chief marvel is, if there be much personal history here, that Shakespeare should have imparted it so freely, and celebrated into notoriety, 'among his private friends,' a woman that he genu-

The dark lady.

inely cared for. It is, indeed, quite likely that his friends would be also her friends, who might resent the frank and unsparing treatment accorded her. These sonnets do not read like poems of correction or reproof, intended for the lady's eye, or their existence and later currency might be accounted for. They seem rather the spiritual diary of a man who records, for himself alone, the soundings of his heart and his progressive acquaintance with eternal law. It is possible that Shakespeare knew fully of the vogue that the 'amour' sonnets had reached abroad, and that he was really celebrating no other than some imaginary Hélène or Camille, without the name, in a thoroughly personal and characteristic vein. It is, however, probable that these sonnets are in some measure autobiographical. Those who wish to establish Shakespeare in literary history as a man of stained character, must have the last word in this matter. It should not be forgotten here that human goodness is but relative, and that conduct is not in itself the final test of character. There are pure men and women who care nothing for purity as such, and there are men and women who keep the whole law, yet are not in alliance with it or with the purposes it serves. We are sure from the works that Shakespeare has left us that he loved purity and truth more than all things else. No man besides has so exalted goodness and worth, or manifested such faith in the fundamental instincts of humanity. The *Sonnets*, because of the insistent amatory burden of their sentiment, are not

Shakespeare's optimism.

agreeable reading in present times, and many people are ignorant of the strength and Keats-like luxuriance of the lines.

The Blackfriars Theatre.

It is established that in 1609 Shakespeare's company came into possession of the Blackfriars Theatre, and that in the following year Shakespeare, Burbage, and Hemmings played in it. This playhouse was opened in 1597, and for some time drew patronage away from The Theatre and The Curtain because of the novelty of boy players. It seems that Shakespeare's company suffered considerable reduction in receipts, and may, as hinted in *Hamlet* (II. ii. 343–360) have been obliged to tour in the counties, to prevent disbanding. In 1611, it is more than probable, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest* were brought out. Shakespeare's contract required him to furnish his company with two plays a year. As no plays seem to have been written after this date, it is presumed that his connection with the Globe Theatre and the King's players did not continue so long as twelve months after. The *Henry VIII* is believed to have been composed after this time, but only a part of it is Shakespeare's. That it was his purpose to withdraw at once to Stratford seems unlikely, since in March of 1613 he bought a house near Blackfriars. The purchase does not appear to have been made as an investment, since £60 of the £140 to be paid was left on mortgage. The building had been used as a shop in the lower story, and was probably wanted as a home. But if it was Shakespeare's pur-

Shakespeare's London house.

pose to bring his wife and daughter to London, and live with them here, he evidently soon changed his mind. In June of this year the Globe Theatre was burned, having caught fire during a performance of *King Henry VIII*, but in the rebuilding and reopening no reference to Shakespeare is met with. It seems clear that he must have withdrawn to Stratford. He is heard of here in connection with an attempt to fence in some part of the common lands within the borough. Entries concerning this, from November, 1614, to September, 1615, in a diary kept by the town-clerk of Stratford, contain Shakespeare's name.

Shakespeare's will.

On the 25th of January, 1616, the first draft of Shakespeare's will was prepared by Francis Collins, a solicitor not of Stratford, but of Warwick, Shakespeare being at this time, according to the opening sentence in the document, in perfect health. In February Judith Shakespeare was married to Thomas Quiney of Stratford. We find nothing after this save that Shakespeare died on the 23d of April, perhaps his birthday, after finishing his fifty-second year. There is a tradition that his disease was fever, and there is reason to believe that his death was preceded by a lingering sickness of this kind. The provisional draft of the will was never copied, but changed seemingly in haste by erasures and interlinear additions, January being corrected to March, but the day of the month standing unaltered as the twenty-fifth. To Susanna Hall is devised the bulk of the property, including New Place, the Henley Street 'messuages or tenementes with thap-

purtenaunces,' as also 'that messuage or tenemente with thappurtenaunces wherein one John Robinson dwelleth, scituat lyeing and being in the Blackfriers in London nere the Wardrobe.' His bequest to Judith is £300, or, in modern values, $12,000. To seven friends, including his fellow-actors Hemmings, Burbage, and Condell, he leaves 26*s.* 8*d.* 'apece to buy them ringes.' In the most important interlinear entry Shakespeare adds, 'I gyve unto my wiefe my second best bed with the furniture.' This was probably the bed on which she habitually slept, and the afterthought of assigning it to her as her own has been strangely construed as indicative, on the part of her husband, of an intentional slight. The best or 'spare' bed, with all the other furnishings of New Place, except the plate, go to Susanna Hall and her husband, who will remove to New Place, and presumably care for their mother there. The transaction was not unlike what was done frequently in wills. Anne Shakespeare was then sixty years old, and probably incapable of much activity in affairs. From ill nutrition, unhygienic living, and other causes, men and women were in general as old at forty, in those times, as at sixty now. Anne Shakespeare, moreover, except in the Blackfriars property, was entitled to dower, and one-third of Shakespeare's realty in and about Stratford would insure, for a plain woman, in any case, much more than a liberal support. Prefixed to the last signature of the will, which is subscribed three times, are the words 'By me,' the only ones believed to be extant,

The second-best bed.

except his own name, from the hand of Shakespeare. Two other authenticated signatures are preserved in documents connected with the transfer of the Blackfriars property.

Shakespeare, as the owner of the tithes of Stratford, was entitled to burial in the chancel of the parish church, and here his grave is shown to-day. The slab covering it bears the famous inscription, according to one tradition composed, according to another selected, by the poet himself: —

> GOOD FREND FOR IESVS SAKE FORBEARE,
> TO DIGG THE DVST ENCLOASED HEARE.
> BLESE BE YE MAN YT SPARES THES STONES,
> AND CVRST BE HE YT MOVES MY BONES.

The explanation of such an unworthy sentiment may lie in the fear, said to have been entertained by Shakespeare, lest his bones should be in later time removed to the charnel house. The Stratford bust. A few years after the burial, a life-size bust of the poet was cut in London, and placed on the wall near the grave. It is believed to have been made from a death mask, and probably preserves the main characteristics of the poet's face. The pose, however, is aggressive and striking, and seems at war with everything that Shakespeare's presence could be imagined to suggest. On a tablet beneath the cushion is an inscription that somewhat redeems the rudely-cut lines, already quoted, upon the slab above the grave: —

IVDICIO PYLIVM, GENIO SOCRATEM, ARTE MARONEM,
TERRA TEGIT, POPVLVS MÆRET, OLYMPVS HABET

STAY PASSENGER, WHY GOEST THOV BY SO FAST?
READ IF THOV CANST, WHOM ENVIOVS DEATH HATH PLAST,
WITH IN THIS MONVMENT SHAKSPEARE: WITH WHOME,
QVICK NATVRE DIDE: WHOSE NAME DOTH DECK YS TOMBE,
FAR MORE, THEN COST: SIEH ALL YT HE HATH WRITT,
LEAVES LIVING ART, BVT PAGE, TO SERVE HIS WITT.

obiit anno doi 1616
aetatis 53 die 23 ap.

The expense of this memorial, which was not small, is said to have been borne by his older daughter. That she was a favourite of her father is evident from the provisions of his will, of which she and her husband, Dr. Hall, were named executors. She must have inherited something of her father's mental superiority, or her marriage to a man of unusual intelligence and cultivation could scarcely be explained. Her goodness also was conspicuous, —

> Witty above her sexe, but that's not all,
> Wise to Salvation was good Mistris Hall;
> Something of Shakespere was in that, but this
> Wholy of Him with whom she's now in blisse,—

if we are to trust the first lines of her epitaph. Both she and her husband are known to have been of Puritan sympathies.

Although the Stratford bust is crude and inartistic, the work of a monument maker and not a statuary,

it has served as our best means of knowing how Shakespeare looked. It was at first coloured, after a fashion of the times, in order to represent the eyes, hair, complexion, and clothing as nearly as possible to the real. In 1793 the whole figure was painted white in imitation of marble. In 1861 this coat of paint was removed, and the original colouring restored, showing the hair and beard to have been auburn-hued, and the eyes, light hazel. Besides this bust nothing authentic was for a long time known to exist except the Droeshout likeness, made by Martin Droeshout, and set on the title-page of the Folio of 1623. This picture was praised by Jonson, and though mechanical and forced is believed to exhibit approximately the proportion of Shakespeare's features. In 1892 the painting from which Droeshout probably made his plate was discovered in a suburb of London. While there are reasons for suspecting that the painting may have been made, near the beginning of the last century or earlier, from the engraving, it is the confident opinion of experts that the world has recovered a genuiue portrait of the author, painted from life, and at the date 1609, which the picture bears. An uncle of Martin Droeshout, the engraver, and of the same name, is known to have emigrated to England from Brabant in 1608, and to have been a painter. Because of certain marks of the Flemish school, seen in the portrait, it has been supposed that this man must have been the artist. The engraving seems clearly a cramped and mechanical attempt to reproduce the

The Droeshout painting.

painting. Of other portraits claimed to be likenesses of Shakespeare, there is no authentic study of the living model, and all are at variance with the Droeshout work.

In 1623 Anne Hathaway, Shakespeare's widow, died, and was buried within the chancel of Stratford church. In the same year the First Folio, the earliest collection of Shakespeare's plays, was brought out under the editorship of Hemmings and Condell, two of the actor friends named in his will. In 1632, 1663, and 1685 the Second, the Third, and the Fourth Folio appeared respectively. Of Shakespeare's daughters, Susanna lived till 1649, and Judith till 1662. None of Judith's children survived her. Elizabeth, daughter of Susanna, was the only grandchild of Shakespeare that reached maturity. She was twice married, but brought her grandfather, who is reported to have been very fond of her, no inheritors of his fame. She died childless in 1670.

The saneness of Shakespeare's mind.

It seems remarkable that Shakespeare, though indubitably a great genius, should have shown from first to last no trace of the erratic and unpractical temper supposed to belong to all men of his sort. Various financial dealings, some of them unmentioned in this sketch, show him to have been anchored beyond the dream-side of existence, and to have divined business chances as readily and unerringly as the proper construction of a play. He seems to have been singularly free from illicit attachments, to which genius is especially liable. He chafed sometimes, if we may believe his

one hundred and eleventh sonnet, at his vocation of a player. He was undoubtedly as upright and pure as Sir Philip Sidney, a man admittedly much better than his generation. It is clear that he grew away from his wife, and perhaps found little pleasure in the society of his younger daughter. But there was no education for women in those days; the plodding wit could not quicken itself by learning. He was kindly and fond of companions. It would seem that he was no respecter of persons; his plays show him inclined to satirise the pretensions of rank. The traditions concerning Shakespeare's conviviality and carousing do not at their worst prove him different from the first men of his day. Sixteenth-century tastes and morals were low at best, and present ideals that temperance reforms have brought are not a hundred years old as yet. There is much that is significant in Shakespeare's life to those who have found the man in his work. To others the facts concerning his career will seem but mutilated and empty annals. There is much that may be discerned in his biography, beyond what is attempted here, by the complete student of his mind and work.

Whether the man who wrote the plays called Shakespeare's was the Shakespeare whose career we have been following, is still doubted by some ingenious and patient readers. It would seem, according to the opinion of these good people, that the burden of proof has shifted, and that those who do not accept the theory that Bacon wrote the plays must explain how Shakespeare, without knowledge

or education, could have produced them. To assume that William Shakespeare, of Stratford-upon-Avon, could not have written the plays that bear his name, is to predicate stricter limitations of genius in this case than are admitted in other departments of the world's work. Shakespeare's task in making the English drama was not greater than Giotto's in making the art of southern Europe, and his discipline was not less ample. Sophocles produced the best dramas of classic time without other preparation than reading the plays that Æschylus wrote. Shakespeare had only the works of Greene and Peele and Lyly as exemplars, but he saw how their weakness could be made strength. This seeing, this vision, is all that distinguishes genius from plodding minds. Schools do not produce vision; they dispense the products of it. We must not set bounds to the seer's seeing. We cannot presume to know the degree to which the faith of an Hermione, the integrity of a Juliet, or the beauty of an Arthur or a Mamillius reveal themselves in the soul of Shakespeare. With this power of seeing, Mozart composes minuets and performs them at sight when he is but four years old. The present writer once knew of an ignorant Irish woman, unable to read or write, who solved abstruse mathematical problems intuitively. There are numberless instances, among the ranks of the uneducated, of feats similar; and it is by no means clear that Shakespeare's achievements really surpass these accepted marvels.

The Bacon question.

On the other hand, if Bacon or some other man of learning wrote the poems and plays called Shakespeare's, we should expect to find many things not present, and not to find many things that are present, in his works. If the author of *Cymbeline* had been expertly trained in Latin quantities, could he have made the stress in Posthumus fall upon the second syllable? If he knew classic instances and parallels, would he not have used them? But the man who wrote the works called Shakespeare's was plainly shut off from the world of books, except Holinshed, Plutarch, and Montaigne, and what the pupil of Stratford Free School might be expected to have reached an acquaintance with. The only classical learning exhibited in the plays of Shakespeare is embodied in quotations from the *Accidence*, *Sententiæ Pueriles*, Lily's *Latin Grammar* and the *Eclogues* of Mantuanus, which were used in the schools of the day. It is hardly likely that a man who had read Latin at Cambridge would quote a passage from Terence, as the author of *The Taming of the Shrew* does certainly, in the incorrect form that appears in Lily's *Grammar*. The person who did that had pretty certainly never seen Terence in the standard text. There are besides many anachronisms and unconsidered references, such as making Galen to have lived before the times of Coriolanus, and putting allusions to the bulls of Bashan into the mouth of Antony, which are inconsistent with good scholarship and a well-trained mind. Bacon could have had no motive to conceal his reading. If Bacon wrote

under the disguise of Shakespeare's name, the expedient would have succeeded no less completely than it has succeeded, had the plays been as full of learning as Ben Jonson's.

So we are forced back to the position of demanding, if the Bacon question must still be argued, that the advocates of the theory accept fully the burden of proof. We are all anxious to know the truth, and have no least willingness to crown a mistaken master. When Bacon shall have been proved the author of *Cymbeline*, and *The Winter's Tale*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, and of *Macbeth*, all lovers of the plays before called Shakespeare's will rejoice to right a wrong, and give unwilling merit its full due.

# VII

## GROUPINGS OF THE PLAYS

Ben Jonson, in his *Timber or Discoveries Made upon Men and Matter*, remarks concerning Shakespeare thus: 'I remember, the players have often mentioned it as an honour to Shakespeare that, in his writing, whatsoever he penn'd, hee never blotted out line. My answer hath beene, would he had blotted a thousand. . . . His wit was in his owne power; — would the rule of it had beene so too! Many times hee fell into those things, could not escape laughter; as when hee said in the person of Cæsar, one speaking to him, — *Cæsar thou dost me wrong;* hee replyed, — *Cæsar did never wrong but with just cause;* and such like; which were ridiculous.' Of course there is no such reading in the present text of *Julius Cæsar*, and probably was not when Jonson wrote. The Folio of 1623, the first collected edition of Shakespeare's dramas, contains the only extant form of the piece, and must have been issued before that time. Jonson aided in the publication of the Folio, and should have known how the lines (III. i. 47, 48) referred to ran. We fancy that we catch a note of envy in his words. It is likely enough that Shakespeare knew little of the art of polishing, and perhaps but partially understood the

Shakespeare and the classicists.

need. It seems certain that he wrote with remarkable fluency, being never bothered for a word. Jonson's utterance voices the criticism of the classicists, who find everywhere too great latitude and liberty of diction. If he could have written like Jonson himself, he would not have pleased his critics, for there were no classical standards as yet. No man has ever been great enough — save Dante — to shape the taste of a whole people. Shakespeare's plays were profounder than any others, and were cast in loftier language, yet were easier to read. His success, like Bunyan's, came from the commoner sort of folk. No writer was ever more available to thoughtful, discerning minds, whether educated or not, than he.

Shakespeare's borrowed plots.

It is often remarked, as derogatory to Shakespeare, that he borrowed his plots, and was therefore unoriginal. To be original is to see to the bottom of things; it is not merely to compass unique sayings. Shakespeare surely saw first principles as profoundly as any thinker who has left record of himself. The seer who understands all social phenomena, does not need to create the data or circumstances that he would explain. The man who knows life, will not manufacture texts by which to preach its lessons. The greater includes the less. Shakespeare was certainly capable of creating a new plot for every play. Being a busy man, and writing, as he supposed, for his own generation, and not for posterity, he was willing to minimise his labour.

Many attempts have been made to divide the

works of Shakespeare into definite and well-marked groups, answering to specific periods of development, but with only partial success. By all such classifications, *Romeo and Juliet* must be parted too far from *Cymbeline*. The division of the Folio into comedies, histories, and tragedies is serviceable, but not final, since the histories are in strictness either tragical or comedial in their nature. From interior reasons it is well to consider Shakespeare's work provisionally under the heads of *Incident Plays*, *Personal Plays*, and *Moral Plays*. These divisions are not chronological, and do not at all follow the course of development in the author's mind. Among Incident Plays, in which incidents are the chief dramatic basis of treatment, are to be reckoned *Titus Andronicus*, *Comedy of Errors*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Tempest*. In the second group belong typically *Richard III*, *Henry V*, and indeed most of the so-called histories, with *Merchant of Venice*, *Twelfth Night*, *Much Ado*, and *Cymbeline*. In each of these dramas the interest centres in some certain personality, as Shylock, Viola, Imogen, and this personality is presented and treated for its own sake. Under Moral Plays are to be classed *Macbeth*, *Coriolanus*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Othello*, and *King Lear*. In these character is not treated, as in *Richard III*, chiefly and finally for its own sake. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth and King Lear are portrayed to us, not for what they are, but for what can be wrought from their potencies and postulates of character.

Divisions of the plays.

It is difficult to suggest a better division for the practical student, at least in his earlier studies of Shakespeare's plays. Much labour has been spent in showing that this author passed through several stages of technical improvement in his blank verse and other details of form. All the results are interesting, as proving the soundness and sufficiency of Shakespeare's mind, but are not particularly satisfying to those still seeking acquaintance and fellowship with that mind. There can be no question that Shakespeare grew in facility and power of utterance. There is no evidence that he grew in wisdom, or in knowledge of human nature, or indeed in art. It is well to realise that in plays of a certain early period he is much conditioned in his paragraphs by the form, and that his characters tend to talk in a constant dialect which is clearly the author's and not their own. Later, after a certain point, the speech of the characters is largely differentiated, and such mastery is reached over metre and other elements of form as to enhance by them rather than reduce the sum of power. We may recognise generically a stage of preparation and a period of maturity and strength. *Twelfth Night* and *The Merchant of Venice* mark this zenith of technique in the comedies; *Hamlet* marks it in the tragedies. To go further than this is to go outside the evident and universal characteristics of Shakespeare's work. How valueless chronologic grounds have proved in the classification is seen from the circumstance that *Julius Cæsar* is held to have been produced next to *Hamlet*, yet does not

Two principal periods.

belong in the same rank of development with that play.

It has been the opinion of some excellent scholars that Shakespeare's work followed closely certain attitudes and preoccupations of his mind; that at one time he was depressed and pessimistic, probably from wrongs; and that the great tragedies, as *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Lear*, dating from this period, are shadowed with his doubt and weighted with his suffering. It would be helpful if we could penetrate Shakespeare's reserve to the extent of finding with certainty any personal mood or weakness mingled with his work. But it seems impossible to be sure of any such subjectivity. It is true that his last three plays, *Cymbeline*, *Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*, are optimistic; but it is not safe to assume that *Othello* or *Macbeth* would have ended comedially if written like them in the last months of his authorship. One play, the *Troilus and Cressida*, laid in times of degeneracy, when even a Hector's judgment is warped by the blandishments of a Helen, is wanting in noble elements, and stands by itself. There is the same spirit in the earlier dramas as in the latest; Viola is treated as tenderly as Imogen. In the heavy tragedies of the so-called pessimistic period we can discern the same governing faith and compelling optimism, and the same redeeming or redeemed use of woman's power as we have been contemplating in *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Winter's Tale*, or may find in every other stage of the poet's work, and in scarcely less

The 'pessimistic' plays.

*Troilus and Cressida*, a play by itself.

degree. *Hamlet* and *King Lear* will perhaps yield proof most easily.

Hamlet's scruples.

The notion that Hamlet lacked energy and decision of character has been held by many critics, but it would seem with too great deference to the authority of first expounders. Of course the revenge called for by the Ghost, if carried out summarily, would make Hamlet King of Denmark. Hamlet, from failing to remember or understand the terms of his commission, 'Howsoever thou pursuest this act, taint not thy mind,' apparently believes himself required to strike down the King immediately on sight. The intent of his father's words is plain; they give him the largest liberty as to place and time, and forbid expressly that he incur the censure of his conscience or his self-respect. To escape the wounded name of having killed his uncle to gain the throne, as all the world, in default of absolute evidence concerning his father's death, will hold him responsible for doing, he thinks (III. i. 56–88) of suicide. He will run the King through with his rapier, then destroy himself. Since his father's demand for vengeance, which was a royal, not a domestic or a personal, requisition, he has been in constant practice (V. ii. 221) with his sword. He has set honestly about the business of cleansing the throne of Denmark. He recognised (I. v. 189, 190) at the outset the national character of his commission, —

> The time is out of joint. O cursed spite,
> That ever I was born to set it right!

He realises now that it will cost him either his honour

or his life. He naturally hesitates in the face of such a fate; he loves the life that he feels he cannot save. He delays the moment, and believes that he may fairly require further proof of his uncle's guilt. His scheme succeeds; the King stops the play that has caught his conscience. Hamlet, in his excitement, imagines that he may yet show the King a murderer to Denmark. He is tempted to despatch the culprit by striking him, while praying, through the back; but the unnational, unprincely quality of the vengeance gives him pause. His mother summons him, apparently to scold him, to her closet. He will go straightway and inflict on her the bloodless punishment due, as he assumes, for complicity in his father's murder.

Hitherto the Queen has been on her husband's side. So far as the audience is concerned, it has despised her. The author will not send Hamlet to his death, in spite of his mother's sin, without restoring her love to him and his to her. Furthermore, Shakespeare will bring her to our sympathies, and invest her with unsuspected strength; he will turn her against her husband, and add immeasurable pathos to the close by her enthusiasm and devotion to her son. He will not wind up the play without making her fill, by repudiating her former self, the place of the woman she should have been. This insistent need of a typic, genuine womanhood, even in a play founded on lust and murder, is of the essence of the optimism that we have affirmed of Shakespeare.

The Queen brought to our sympathies.

Indeed, the attempt to redeem Gertrude to herself

and to the play, in the face of what would seem insuperable artistic difficulties, is indicative of the degree of Shakespeare's wish to mitigate the sin and wrong with which he was forced, for plot reasons, to begin the piece. Nowhere else in this work, perhaps nowhere else in the other dramas, does he accomplish a larger feat. It would take years, in real life, to bring about the changes that are effected here within the compass of two hundred lines. The business opens summarily (III. iv) after seven lines of connection with the preceding scene. 'Now, mother, what's the matter,' says the summoned visitor, in a boyish, familiar, unprincely salutation. It is some time, we may be sure, since Hamlet has been asked to come to his mother's closet. 'Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended,' is the significant reply. This tainted mother will essay to school her son, his father's avenger. 'Mother, you have my father much offended.' The retort makes her wince: does Hamlet *know?* But no matter; there is but one thing to be done. She must assume a virtue, if she have it not. 'Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.' These words should make him realise his impertinence. But Hamlet takes issue; he has indeed come with no other purpose than to take issue. So he answers impetuously, echoing by contraries, 'Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.' The Queen's natural rejoinder is surprise, injured innocence, at that word 'wicked,'—'Why, *how now*, Hamlet, have you *forgot me?*' 'No, by the

How Shakespeare redeems the Queen.

rood, *not* so. You are the Queen, *your husband's brother's wife*, and — would it were not so — you *are my mother*.' Thus far our sympathies are with Hamlet. It is time that these things were said to the Queen by somebody, and we care not if they are said to her by her son.

Here the first integral division of the scene closes. The Queen is bound, of course, to make a show of indignation; she starts forth vaguely, perhaps with the thought of summoning the King. 'Nay, then, I'll set those to you that can speak.' Hamlet now takes his mother by the shoulders, and thrusts her into a chair. 'Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge; you go not until I set you up a glass where you may see the inmost part of you.' Very natural is it that this woman should recoil from such a programme. Her 'Help, ho,' is echoed from behind the arras by Polonius, whom Hamlet, hoping it is the King, strikes down.

The second division of the scene.

Here ends the second part of this strange scene. Were we present, we should exclaim against this violence of Hamlet towards his mother. Then we should be immeasurably awed by the spectacle of the dead body lying at the bottom of the arras. Death is the great reformer of prejudice; and now, in the sight of Polonius slain, we find that we have charity not only for that man's weakness, but also for the Queen's. One death has made amends, in some degree, not for him merely, but for the twain together. This is helped, moreover,

The beginning of our charity.

by the discovery, flashed upon us at this astounding moment, through the Queen's surprise at the charge of 'killing a king,' that she was not privy to her husband's murder. With this beginning, Hamlet goes on to enforce a sort of spiritual penance, not without great cost to himself as our hero, for his mother. As she stands aghast, wringing her hands in anguish, Hamlet again forces her to sit, affirming that he will wring her heart. Plainly, Shakespeare's hand is heavy upon his hero. For the sake of bringing back Hamlet to his mother, who has lost him; for the sake of having the mother minister to the son in love and sympathy at the end of the play; for the sake besides of bringing an erring woman back to such relations with society as will enable her love and sacrifice for her son to have influence with us, Shakespeare will make the son harsh and brutal to his mother here. At Hamlet's first words the Queen retreats again behind the prerogative of her sex, — 'What have *I* done, that thou darest wag thy tongue in noise so rude against me?' His answer is as near to the suggestion of her guilt as he dare go, or as the author can artistically permit: —

> Such an act
> That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,
> Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose
> From the fair forehead of an innocent love
> And sets a blister there, makes marriage vows
> As false as dicers' oaths.

The Queen refuses to admit that she understands this language. 'Ay me,' she says, —

*What* act
That roars so loud and thunders in the index ?

It were indeed unseemly that a royal mother — this royal mother, who is to be restored to the love and devotion of her son — should go in definiteness much beyond. Hamlet is made to refrain from answering her question. The author turns him aside, in the declamation beginning, we shall remember, —

Look here, upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers,—

into a tirade against her present husband, not altogether relevant to the indictment which Hamlet has been pressing. At its close the Queen cries out: —

O Hamlet, speak no more!
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul,
And there I see such black and grained spots
As will not leave their tinct.

Here ends the third division, the third stage, in this closet interview. Our feelings of dislike and revulsion have changed to surprise, and something like concern, as we see the marks of contrition in the face of the Queen, and hear her words of confession to her son. Yet it is only to us and for our sake dramatically that she admits the consciousness of wrong. We begin to realise what the task is which Shakespeare has here set himself. If this were life, we should be content to part company here and thus with the Queen, to wish her no evil, and to forget her existence. But this is not the end, nor even yet the middle of the scene; there are still

The stage of pity.

large changes to be wrought within our sympathies. The means first used is pity. Hamlet is made to go on scurrilously, beyond all reason, first by implication against her who sits aghast and trembling, —

> Nay, but to live . .
> Stewed in corruption, —

to which the Queen can only cry out, breaking in upon his violence: —

> Oh, speak to me no more!
> These words like daggers enter in my ears.
> No more, sweet Hamlet.

This has indeed gone too far. Will he drive her crazy? She is no longer at war with conscience, is no longer indignant at the voice that is calling her to account. But he has put himself, as the instrument of her penitence, wholly in the wrong, and now essays to punish her. All her pleading, even with her hands stopping her ears, is of none effect. Were this scene actual, we should interfere for her, we should plead in her behalf with her against her persecutor. Helpless as she, we are forced to listen as Hamlet raves on against the King: —

> A murtherer and a villain;
> A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe
> Of your precedent lord; a vice of kings;
> A cutpurse of the empire and the rule, —
> A king of shreds and patches.

The fourth stage. The fourth stage in the transactions of the scene begins at this point. The wrong done by the Queen to herself she feels and has acknowledged. The wrong done to her dead husband re-

mains paramount in our consciousness. How can that be taken from our thought, from the associations of her past? The Ghost is brought in to answer. Hamlet, unpersuaded as to his father's will, asks in dismay whether he be not come to chide his tardy son, that lets go by the important acting of his dread command. The Ghost makes but a perfunctory and evasive answer, — 'Do not forget,' — as if Hamlet, whose soul is full of the obligation to revenge, whose days and nights have been chafed and fevered at the delay, at whose feet lies even now the dead body of Polonius, slain because mistaken for the King, could have forgotten. Then the real concern of this shadowy visitant, which he conceals for obvious reasons from his son, is betrayed. He has come, from old love of the Queen, to stop her punishment. He will not reveal himself to *her;* remorse might destroy her life. He would save her all further suffering, if he may, even of the thorns that prick and sting her in her bosom. With majestic tenderness he turns Hamlet's eyes to the spectacle that they have too little regarded hitherto. 'Look, amazement (distraction) on thy mother sits. Take her part against her other self, which condemns her for her sin. Her imagination has been too much wrought upon already. Speak to her, as thou shouldst, in kindness and sympathy.' There can be no mistaking the spirit or the purpose of this rebuke; Hamlet should have remembered that he is forbidden (I. v. 85, 86) to contrive against his mother aught. At the first apparition of the Ghost, in the first act, Hamlet showed

little fear. His present fright seems to mark how deeply he feels that he is in the wrong.

When an injured husband forgives, the rest of the world drops the matter. So we here and now drop the cause of the elder Hamlet, as against Gertrude, from our thought. Moreover, the voice of love and forgiveness that we have heard is a voice from the other world, speaking with other than the authority of men. The Ghost tarries to make sure that Hamlet does 'speak' to her, indeed, but not in the former way, and look upon her, not as an avenger, but a reconciled son. Satisfied that his stern rebuke is heeded, that there will be no more harsh words, he goes his way. At the moment when the Queen recovers her self-possession, finding Hamlet as she thinks distracted, she is restored to her former self, redeemed, and she carries the audience and the reader with her.

The Ghost's forgiveness.

Now comes the next step in the plan. What of the future of the Queen? Shall she live still with the paramour who killed Hamlet's father? Were she to presume this, or seem to presume it, the presumption would be fatal to the purpose that Shakespeare has thus far attempted. Of course, under all the circumstances, since Gertrude cannot know of the vengeance awaiting Claudius, she must continue to be Queen of Denmark, and wife to Hamlet's uncle. But how shall the author make us see this and realise it in such a way that, from this time, we shall be no more scandalised at the thought. To have Hamlet discuss the question,

The fifth step.

and affirm to his mother that it were right and well so to do, might be Ben Jonson, or Otway, or Colley Cibber, but it would not be Shakespeare. To him there is apparently but one way, though he be again compelled to levy injuriously upon his hero. Hamlet is made, sentimentally and absurdly, to urge upon his mother the very opposite course: advice which he does not seem to remember afterwards, and advice which he surely did not mean. He knew that his mother could not cease to be wife to the King even if she would, and that her contrition is not sufficient to prompt her immuring herself behind convent walls, even if she could. The situation is clear to us, and its effect on us complete, when we hear Hamlet bid his mother 'go not to his uncle's bed.'

The author is ready for another step. The mother and her son are restored to each other. Her feeling toward him and his feeling toward her are such as have not been since he came back from Wittenberg. What shall be their relations hereafter? Shall she stand with the King, as hitherto, against her son, or against the King and on Hamlet's side? With her woman's intuition she now knows that Hamlet the elder has been murdered, and that Hamlet the younger cannot make peace with the King. Moreover, there can be no pathos at the close of the play, if Hamlet have not his mother's love entire and fully. But how are we to know of this alliance apart from what we see hereafter? Hamlet in playful irony bids his mother let the King coax from her his secret, namely, that he is

The Queen will stand with Hamlet.

essentially not in madness, but mad in craft. Her answer is unequivocal, the most motherly and unaffected thing she has said thus far in the play: —

> Be thou assured, if words be made of breath,
> And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
> What thou hast said to me.

There is yet another integral part of the scene to be developed. Hamlet believes again in his mother; the instincts to confide in her as his best friend possess him again just as in youth and boyhood, when he told her his ills, his hopes, his projects. He is now made to give proof of his new and perfect trust. He is in possession of the King's secrets. The young nobility, or some of them, are apparently in league for his defence. Through some agency of theirs the knowledge of the mandate, in the sealed letters, has been communicated to Hamlet. The purpose of the King he will, by the aid of friends, forestall; for he is utterly powerless alone. The King manifestly does not dare touch Hamlet upon the soil of Denmark. Seemingly in fear of an uprising, he keeps his court still in Kronberg, or the Marienlist palace, on the island of Seeland, away from the capital. To withhold from the King, at such a time, the least hint of his danger, is a supreme test of Gertrude's new loyalty to her son. That Hamlet intrusts his mother with the knowledge that he can command the King's most secret counsels, is the strongest possible proof of his renewed devotion. With no fear lest his confidence shall be betrayed, with no further exhortation,

Proof of Hamlet's renewed trust in the Queen.

this son, bidding his mother a familiar and affectionate 'good night' that brings back lively associations of earlier years, goes out from the scene. He has suffered some detriment as a hero, but that shall be repaired; while, on the other hand, both he and the play have gained a mother.

The Queen's new rôle.

The Queen begins her new rôle strongly at the opening of the next scene. She puts on a profound sighing, and tells the valiant falsehoods that Hamlet is mad as the sea and wind, and is weeping because he has killed Polonius. The King turns her report to his advantage against Hamlet, at which she sulks, and breaks seemingly into tears. We can hardly believe that her grief is genuine, when we remember her small concern, at the end of the last scene, about his going. Hitherto she has never appeared, except in the closet scene, apart from her husband. She does not, except for the fencing contest and at the burial, come in with him again. She shows anxiety at Ophelia's grave over Hamlet's naïve dealings with Laertes, and his forgetting to feign that he is mad. Divining that the King and Laertes are plotting mischief, in connection with the wager, she sends word privately to Hamlet that he use some gentle entertainment to Laertes, before they fall to play. Divining further, after the fencing begins, that the King's enthusiasm for Hamlet is ungenuine, and that it is not intended that he shall come out of the sport alive, she sends him her napkin for his brows, and drinks excitedly to his success, resisting the King's attempt to take the goblet from her. There

is no other way to give him courage against his enemy, so she carouses to his fortune and the King's confusion. She assists, and perhaps of purpose, Hamlet's punishment of her husband's crimes.

The play has long been the most popular, in part because the most enigmatical, of all the dramas. There is no reason to suppose Shakespeare intended, in the title character, to propound a mystery. It is doubtful if any of the critics who have called Hamlet a dreamer, a palaverer, or a coward, would have been, possessing a like sense of honour, less slow to strike. They find themselves influenced most perhaps by Hamlet's soliloquy (IV. iv.) over the proposed campaign of Fortinbras in Poland. They find him going tractably away into indefinite exile, far from the chance of vengeance, yet breathing out all the while fresh threatenings and slaughter in his father's name. To have made a hero who, at his best of wisdom and endeavour, should resolve that 'from this time forth his thoughts be bloody or be nothing worth,' while he is actually expecting to be stayed at an impossible distance from the object of his revenge, would have been to make game of the readers and spectators of *Hamlet* for all time. But Hamlet, as we have seen, does not expect to be exiled indefinitely in England, perhaps not even to be landed there. In a few days he shall be back, within a rapier's length again of the King's body. When the appointed moment comes, Hamlet is magnificent in action. Though the King is surrounded with his court and attendants, well armed, many of them cer-

Hamlet magnificent in action.

tainly loyal to himself, Hamlet awes them all into helplessness as he orders the doors locked, stabs the King through with the envenomed blade, and forces him to drink off the poisoned wine. It is difficult to see how the objectors could have made the hero of this play behave, under the circumstances of the plot, much better than Shakespeare has ordained the course of the Hamlet that we find. Infinitely perplexed as to the form and manner of his duty, he accepts his fate, when once the path is opened, with divine repose and strength. Literature shows nowhere a nobler protagonist of right and truth.

*King Lear* is generally considered as the greatest of Shakespeare's tragedies, at least in point of grim and titanic suffering. Here a spoiled and wilful ruler, who has rioted in emotional excesses for fourscore years, is suddenly subjected to unspeakable wrongs and crosses, and what with humiliation, and what with cold and hunger and neglect, loses his mind. But insanity thus caused is not incurable; removal of the occasion brings back his reason. Thus the ultimate point of the drama involves regeneration, redemption of a violent nature by violence, and the play is largely given to the application and administering of the remedial forces. When he can no longer hold his kingdom, or take a city, he learns how to rule his spirit, and is really ready at last to live. *King Lear.*

It will be perhaps most helpful to contemplate the play as divided into these two parts: the evolution and operation of Lear's punishments; the moral con-

valescence of his mind. The origin and development of the disease Shakespeare takes for granted. The first great shock comes to Lear from the revolt of Cordelia, in the opening scene. There have been three daughters in this king's household; there is but one now, and the mother has for some time been dead. Goneril, the eldest, a fleshly and avaricious creature, big of bone and masculine in fibre, is now outside the family with a husband,—as it would seem of her own securing,—the Duke of Albany. Regan, also wedded to a subject, has left her father's home for the Earl of Cornwall's castle; she, as we cannot doubt, much of her mother's mould, small of stature, refined and womanly, and nearer to her father's heart. Cordelia and her father have made a home together, and for some years perhaps it has been his will to keep this daughter, his last and least, as he calls her, a petite creature, weaker in presence and more lovable, immeasurably more lovable than Regan, to himself. When she shall wed, it is determined that her husband shall be at least a prince, and two suitors of this rank have long made their amorous sojourn at the court, waiting the father's pleasure. At length King Lear, perhaps awakening to the injustice of keeping her unmarried to cheer his fireside, proposes to endow her with the choicest of his lands, part the residue between her sisters, and withdraw from the palace that would be desolate without her. Goneril and Regan, realising that neither is their father's favourite, scheme to secure as large a portion as they each can of the dismembered

The two divisions of this play.

kingdom. Blind to the jeopardy of a divided sovereignty, and anxious as it would seem but to have his old ears tickled with outrageous flattery, Lear plans to go out in a blaze of glory, and to exalt Cordelia with such a gift as king's hands never gave before. Perhaps he has thought, by the richness of her dowry, in itself a kingdom, to keep her prince with her in Britain, and so spend his days still with her.

So the first of his calamities comes to King Lear, much as if another drama of Job were to be enacted, in the first scene. It is a spectacular, yet a domestic, situation. There are no courtiers called to be witnesses save Kent and Gloster, with Gloster's son, which last-named person, according to the Folio, remains, and reads, perhaps, in the strange procedures, the chance of a traitorous career. Before the King, now entering, is borne the coronet that is to rest on Cordelia's brows, as the earnest of her dowry. The King takes the throne and calls immediately for a map of Britain. He knows what affection each of his daughters bears him, yet he bids for protestations, feigning, though the portion of each is predetermined, that he will match his giving with their saying. Goneril goes soberly though the farce of formulating her affection, making it as extreme as breath can phrase it, and giving the whole the momentum of her overplus of personality. Cordelia, who cannot be oratorical, feels that she is outclassed already, and resolves not to be heard in competition with such falseness. Regan, with seeming greater confidence

The first calamity.

in her father's favour, with greater womanliness, takes her sister's sermon for her text, — 'only she comes too short.' The suspicion is aroused here, to be confirmed later, that Regan's part could scarcely have been played as we find it, had there been no rival to give her the cue. But now the proud father, having cleared the field, and settling himself for his joy, not the joy alone of hearing Cordelia testify to her affection, but withal the joy of making her mistress of half his kingdom, asks her to do her part in this abdication ceremonial. There is silence. He bids her speak. With inexplicable and unfeeling deliberation she answers, 'Nothing.' Lear cannot at first believe his ears. He makes inquiry if she means unfilially and wilfully to disappoint him, and she dares, standing in all her helplessness before him to say, 'Ay.' It is the bitterest moment in this father's life. But there is no help for it. This defiance must be punished, and the thunderbolts of wrath fall upon her head.

Goneril's ambition.

The discipline of adversity is now administered, with all of Shakespeare's terrible dramatic condensation, to the ruined King. Even before the first scene closes, Goneril bespeaks Regan's coöperation in her father's ruin. Does she think to crowd out Regan and her weakling husband, and so make herself sole heir? She has inherited all the force of her father's will, and joins withal such consciencelessness and cruelty as make her monstrous beyond example among Shakespeare's women. She knows that her father is tyrannical, and can be driven

easily to exasperation. She means to goad him to leave her, and she will control her sister's sympathies toward him. So within a fortnight comes the order to put on weary negligence toward the King and all his followers. The result is that Lear falls in a rage, orders out his horses only just stalled for their fodder after hunting, and sets out for Gloster without touching the dinner that he was demanding to have immediately served. Goneril despatches a letter to Gloster, to prevent Regan from receiving her father there.

Lear rides all night on the way to Gloster town, only to find Regan and her husband gone, of purpose, to Gloster castle. Following also thither, he discovers Kent whistling and singing in the stocks, on the castle esplanade. Lear's wrath has cooled overnight; but, at this insult to himself through his servant, it blazes out again. He feels the madness coming; how is *he* to endure such insolence? Cornwall and Regan at last appear, and at a covert signal, probably from the former, Kent is set at liberty. But the half-famished father is not asked within. Little by little Regan's and Cornwall's courage comes. Regan tells her father that he is old, and insignificant, begs him to go back to her sister and ask forgiveness. Lear cannot take this seriously, and Regan cannot find the words to exasperate her father as Goneril's language did.

> Ask *her* forgiveness?
> Do you but mark how this becomes the house:
> 'Dear daughter, I confess that I am old.
> Age is unnecessary. On my knees I beg
> That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food.'

Regan a second Lady Macbeth.

We should have expected another curse as terrible as the one pronounced, just before leaving the Duke of Albany's palace, upon Goneril. But Lear seems to feel that this is the one prop now left; the self-control that keeps back denunciation here shows that there is chance of cure. Goneril now arrives, and at sight of her Lear loses all mastery over himself. He feels the madness coming, and pleads with Goneril to save him. Hunger and exhaustion urge him, and he consents even to go back with her. But Goneril will not have it so, and by denying him his knights makes him break out in tears, and turn his steps away toward the barren and houseless moor. Cornwall proposes that they withdraw within the castle. Regan, like a Lady Macbeth, all unendowed for cruelty, in the excitement of an almost realised ambition, is found consenting to the work her sister and her husband have determined. Regan could not of her own purpose have thrust out her father. Goneril was needed to bring to pass this turn. She has been summoned by the author for this artistic object, through the motive of preventing Regan from taking her father's part.

Lear pities his fool.

In the Third Act Lear's agony is complete. To break with his fourscore years of privilege and princely living, and sink to the lowest depths of deprivation and suffering, would turn the wits of any man. But it is worth while that he find himself too poor to feed his devoted fool, since his heart begins to soften. The more he raves, the more patient and forgiving he becomes. Little by little he

loses the power to identify his surroundings, though he yet sees pictures of his happy past, and remembers Tray and Blanche and Sweetheart, Cordelia's pet dogs, amid all the wreck of ideas and fancies. Then comes the worst; that exquisite irritableness so often noted in the pathology of the insane to-day, when they cry out that the stars burn them, takes possession of his mind. Even the fool forgets his gibes and foolishness. Even Edgar, trepidated by the presence of his father, whom he must keep from recognising the tones of his voice, is moved to tears and pity. The punishment of Lear is full, for he has forgotten, in the sufferings of others, his own woes.

Lear not savage or brutish.

Lear has been thought a savage and brutish nature. But the language that he uses argues a mind of singular refinement, and proves him capable of much loftiness of mood and vision. A man is not so well known by the vocabulary he uses as by the elevation of thought that compels the selection of noble words. Even Lear's curses, so awful in their fierceness, are sublime. Were Lear bloodthirsty, he would have put Cordelia to death, when she crossed him, and struck down Goneril and Regan, while they baited him before Gloster castle, with his sword.

Regan nearer to Cordelia than to Goneril.

Goneril is sensual, and, with all of woman's falseness, false at heart. She exalts Oswald to the post of favourite, puts on him princely clothing, sets him at writing letters in her name, girds him with a sword and calls him 'my gentleman.' Kent makes him betray the

fact that he has no gentleman's breeding and cannot use a sword. But Goneril's fondness for his shape, and his dainty 'clerk' services, does not hinder her from attempting to appropriate Edmund in an intrigue, as soon as she has the chance to woo him. Regan is not of such coarse mould, and is fairly ladylike (IV. v) over her rival's letter. Goneril would have gained possession of such a missive, under like circumstances, at any cost. Regan's worst conclusion concerning her sister's character is that she does not love her husband. Goneril's purity of thought would not have hindered a grosser judgment.

Cordelia has been pronounced the most beautiful of Shakespeare's feminine creations, but this judgment seems not well advised. She has plainly no such sympathy with her father in his violence and passion as Imogen feels when Cymbeline banishes Posthumus. She shows something of Lear's unshrinking, combative disposition, when she brings upon herself her father's curse. She knew what the disappointment would mean to him, she was well aware that her father would curse her to his own infinite hurt and sorrow; but she forced him to his fate. What was it, furthermore, in outside conditions, that brought into play before her father this unsuspected wilfulness? Was it nineteenth-century revolt against enforced marriage with a designing suitor? Was it revulsion against the transparent flattery of her sisters? Was it that conscious love had arisen between France and herself, during his amorous sojourn, already, while that Burgundy was in prece-

dence with her father? Shakespeare has not helped us, with his wonted consideration, in these hard matters.

Cordelia rises to her height of favour with us when the music plays softly, and the daughter kisses her restored and regenerate father awake. What could be more pathetic than the climax (IV. vii. 71) here, when Lear puts up his hand to the tears on Cordelia's face to make sure that they are tears indeed, that she is not a soul in bliss, and, so, far beyond his reach. Dimly, but potently in his consciousness, even in his madness, he has held fast to the presence of Cordelia, and felt his sin. Step by step he comes back into possession of himself, a self now beautiful in forbearance and forgiveness and humility: — The reconciliation.

> You must bear with me. Pray you now
> Forget and forgive; I am old and foolish.

The scene ends in an idyllic picture. The gigantic frame of the once violent father, a little bent with recent suffering, his wealth of gray hair all dishevelled, is supported by the slender, upstrained arm of Cordelia, which cannot well reach to his shoulder, as she walks to his slow step out from the tent into the air and sunshine. Small wonder is it that we hear this king saying after the battle and the capture, —

> Come, let's away to prison.
> We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage.
> When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
> And ask of thee forgiveness. So we'll live,
> And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh

> At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
> Talk of court news; and we'll talk with them too,
> Who loses, and who wins, who's in, who's out,
> And take upon 's the mystery of things,
> As if we were God's spies: and we'll wear out,
> In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones,
> That ebb and flow by the moon.

Yet this is the monster who, quaking with rage, had said to Cordelia scarcely one moon ago: —

> The barbarous Scythian,
> Or he that makes his generation messes
> To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
> Be as well neighbour'd, piti'd, and reliev'd
> As thou my sometime daughter.

We shall hardly call the piece a pessimistic study, wrought from the broodings of an injured mind. The whole ends tragically, following the course in Holinshed, and Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle. Cordelia, to save her father, invaded England. Lear, to be saved by his daughter, became a traitor in his own kingdom. Lear survives his cure, and might have reigned again, but the cost of his follies kills him.

Three more great tragedies, *Othello*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Coriolanus* belong to the strenuous period, from which *Lear* and *Macbeth* sprang. To these, that we may make the group of principal tragedies complete, *Julius Cæsar* should be added. The last-named drama antedates *Othello*, *Lear*, and perhaps *Macbeth*, we shall remember, by half a dozen years. It is a piece plain and homely, like the Droeshout portrait, yet no less masterly than the others, and not less despairing in tone and spirit. The

*Julius Cæsar.*

pall of destiny is upon it. Liberty is in its shroud, yet the people keep holiday. They have lost even recognition of what their forefathers did when they thrust out the Tarquin. They have no principles; Pompey's triumph over the enemies of Rome, or Cæsar's triumph over Pompey, are all the same to them. There is no longer any patriotism among them, and the strong arm is the only rule that they will respect. Nowhere else does Shakespeare lay his hand so heavily upon one of the world's great ones as he presumes to do in his treatment of Cæsar here. We are forced to discard our notions of Cæsar's greatness, and hold him dotardly and mean, until our consent to his death is won. Brutus represents the highest type of the Græco-Roman mind, unconscious because without sense of sin, having no inward struggles, such as make Hamlet typical of the Gothic race, erring continually, yet incapable of self-distrust. By a feminine resolution he joins the conspirators, believing that justice as administered by himself will redeem the self-seeking character of their cause. Portia is one of the noblest of Shakespeare's women, and deserves treatment as a principal character for her own sake. But, lest she absorb attention, she is shown but twice, being used as an aid in forcing our consent to Cæsar's death. There is much of political philosophy and sociology in the piece. It is not a play to be lightly studied.

*Othello* has been regarded by many students and critics as the highest triumph of Shakespeare's art. It is a study in the consequences of a union between

two natures equally true and noble, but of different races, and of unlike station and culture. Desdemona is the child of fortune, born in a palace, and bred to a life of elegant leisure, yet strong and intolerant of the degeneracy which her race had reached. Othello has been brought up in camps, and lacks the refinement that comes from the pursuits of Renaissance literature, and the cultivation of art and music. Desdemona has been fascinated by Othello's simple and elemental greatness of soul. Othello has been flattered by Desdemona's admiration for his prowess and exploits. Since her father would never consent to her marriage with a Moor, Desdemona determines to trust herself to Othello's keeping, and turns her back upon her family and her circle. The question to be worked out dramatically is whether her trust in Othello is warranted, whether he is capable of appreciating and guarding the jewel he has won. Can he work out her destiny with his own? Did they err to wed from such disparate stations and modes of living?

*Othello.*

Had they remained always in the native environment of the bride, it is likely that their happiness would have been unmarred. Shakespeare wishes the trial made under harder conditions. He devises the threat of a Turkish attack on Cyprus, to get Othello and his wife away from Venice. In the chief fortified city of the island, where Othello is absolute ruler under martial law, we can better study the nobility of the husband's mind. A storm is made to have destroyed the Turkish fleet, and the new-married pair

are free to work out their felicity under circumstances in which they should have been peculiarly all the world to each other. The tempter of their peace comes in the shape of a cowardly and heartless office-seeker. He gets Othello's lieutenant into disgrace with his chief, and is made acting-subaltern in his stead. To secure this post perpetually, he makes Othello jealous of Cassio, the suspended lieutenant, a courtly and accomplished countryman of Desdemona's, and manages to elicit a virtual order to put this man to death by assassination. In so far he has succeeded. But the wild nature that he has aroused will not stop with the death of Cassio. Othello feels that he must destroy the woman who has given herself into his care. Had he been of Desdemona's race and breeding, he would have read her face, and found her soul. Being a Moor, he cannot know the difference between her and any other woman, born in a palace, of half her worth and rareness. The woman who craves manliness and strength must not compound for these virtues by forfeiting all the amenities and accomplishments of the highest living. Seldom will a match so made turn out to have been based upon the true affinities. The whole tragedy turns upon the material circumstance of Desdemona's handkerchief, given to Cassio in Othello's sight by Bianca, Cassio's mistress, who is introduced for this and another kindred purpose into the play.

The *Antony and Cleopatra* is popularly assumed to deal baldly and unsparingly with unethical and even disreputable social conduct. The relations of the

*Antony and Cleopatra.*

title characters are as told of in history so notorious that most readers approach the play with some misgiving. But Shakespeare exercises no pessimistic privileges even here. No diligent and discerning student finds himself scandalised over the course of the plot, or the matter in the lines. There is the same eventual release and redemption from evil that we have noted in other dramas of this period. There are really two tragedies fused into one. The tragedy of Antony culminates in Act IV; the tragedy of Cleopatra is developed in Act V. The art of the author is perhaps more potently exercised in this drama than elsewhere in all his works. The piece opens with a situation that confirms the traditions and presumption touching the title characters. Antony is dancing attendance upon the Queen in a most un-Roman and unstalwart fashion. But as we listen to the dialogue we become persuaded that the blame does not belong equally to Rome and Egypt. Antony is not the principal in the case; Cleopatra solicits his devotion publicly and unblushingly. We are thus drawn into something like sympathy for Antony, which is increased when Cleopatra presently goads him into refusing audience to the messengers. Little by little we are led to give countenance to Antony, as he hears the reports of the messengers, since sent for, and regrets the death of his shrewish wife. He refuses to use the freedom that has now come to him; he will leave Cleopatra, and take up the duties of his rule. Cleopatra gibes him, and plies him with all her wiles, from pretended wrath to tears,

to prevent his going. Antony is considerate and chivalrous, but firm; and the play finds itself provided with a hero. The author begins at once, before the scene finishes, to redeem Cleopatra, and almost accomplishes this by the enthusiastic and whole-souled way in which he makes her give up her control. Before the act is closed, the play is provided also with an irresistible heroine. By no sort of means, if Shakespeare had attempted to treat these characters, as history presents them, together, could he have made them practicable for his purpose. By withdrawing Antony from Cleopatra, and leaving the burden of blame to be borne by her, the author grounds the whole on ethic principles. In like fashion he develops and completes the tragedy of Antony by making Cleopatra chargeable with his ruin. Then he redeems again his heroine. Antony perishes because he has been too generous, and esteemed himself too lightly. Cleopatra, because undisciplined, selfish, self-willed, has been the evil genius of his career. But there are magnificent possibilities in her nature. In any other environment she might have been altogether noble. Bred under the corrupt influences of a degenerate civilisation, vain and self-indulgent almost beyond belief, she is nevertheless grand in strength and vision. The death of Antony, and the determination to save herself from Cæsar, arouse her better powers. Right aspirations possess her. In the sublimity of her dying thoughts she forgets the royal finery in which she has ordered herself arrayed. Her selfishness is merged in the completeness of her re-

nunciation. That she comes to death when she has but begun to live is of the essence of this second tragedy. The tragedy of Cleopatra is greater than the tragedy of Antony, for Antony had never lived selfishly or ignobly. The play is a study in character consequences, and makes for righteousness more potently than a thousand sermons.

*Coriolanus.*

In strong contrast with *Julius Cæsar* and *Antony and Cleopatra* stands *Coriolanus*, a play of stalwart and patriotic Rome in the early age. The beginnings of the latter-day degeneracy, which is exhibited so powerfully in the first two of the dramas just named, are hinted at. The plebeians have achieved their first conquest of power, and are using it irresponsibly and wildly against the aristocratic party. The newly appointed tribunes resort to demagoguery at the outset, and enrich (*cf.* IV. vi. 160) themselves at the people's cost. The potent figure in the play is Volumnia, the perfect type of Roman womanhood, from whose strength the conquerors of the world were born. It is her pride, her life, to have been the mother of a hero, who has done the state noble services, who bears the marks of twenty-seven wounds, and has come the third time home crowned with the oak. The father of this champion seems to have been no patriot, struck no blows for his country, saved the life of no citizen; for nowhere does this proud dame mention him. The son inherits his mother's strength, but derives a foolish, bragging egotism seemingly from the father. Coriolanus cares nothing, or next to nothing, for the state. He covets

only to be invincible, and would, as he declares, change sides to fight with Tullus Aufidius, whom he thinks he outrivals, and who is everything that a Coriolanus cannot be. Cominius and Titus Lartius and Menenius are typic representatives of the better class that has built Rome and is defending it and sustaining the burdens of its civic life. Volumnia, who once saves her son and once the state, in his despite, is no whit unwomanly, making up in motherly devotion what she loses by the exercise of a more than masculine force of will. The beautiful thing in the play is the boyish obedience of Coriolanus to his mother. His wife Virgilia is his counterpart, as well as Volumnia's foil, shrinking from her husband's feats, and happy in him for his personal and domestic worth. The play has been called a tragedy of pride. It is rather a tragedy of selfishness and self-will. With a little more willingness to sacrifice for the general good, Coriolanus might have been the chief figure in Roman annals. But he was so made up that he became instead a traitor. The play is also in part a study in the civics of classic time, when the state seemed not to exist for its citizens, but its citizens for the state.

The great plays of the list, while generally supposed to comprise only these that we have dealt with from among the tragedies, must fairly include some of the comedies. There can be small doubt as to the choice; no one of these six, *As You Like it*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Twelfth Night*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *Midsummer Night's* The great comedies.

*Dream*, and *Much Ado about Nothing*, can be left out. Some glimpses of the human nature and of the art in these, time must be found to add.

*Much Ado about Nothing* is well named, being one of the slenderest of all the plays. It is founded upon the reciprocal irritation that some strong natures seem to feel at sight of each other, when they are nevertheless near to being complete affinities. Beatrice is in this case the stronger, and is drawn with something like a motherly impulse to Benedict, who has been advised to conquer his fondness for her. Benedict is for his part flattered that one who has put him down in wit-combats should affect him hopelessly. To give substance to the piece, and afford the lovers a makeshift motive for dealing with each other, there is a second plot. It would not do to have Beatrice made game of in her own house, so she is presented to us as but a niece to Leonato. Leonato's daughter is traduced by a Spanish villain, and Benedict engages, because Beatrice requests it, to avenge her. But the plot has been overheard by Dogberry and Verges, two blundering English constables, imported to Messina to furnish farcical matter for the piece. Italian officers would have known and used their native tongue unambitiously and correctly. Hero suffers in a way that amounts to tragedy; but we do not take her troubles very seriously, the play getting thus its proper counterpoise of sorrow. Benedict does not fight his friend Claudio, and was made to challenge him merely to establish to us the seriousness of his

*Much Ado.*

feeling, and the subordination of his mind and will to Beatrice. In spite of the lightness of the plot, profound principles of psychology and human nature are depended upon to keep the whole sensible and sound.

*Midsummer Night's Dream.*

*The Midsummer Night's Dream* seems to have been inspired by the wish to make a play dealing with fairies and the unseen world of their activity. In Shakespeare's age the popular mind was still astir over interferences assumed to come from the domain of tricksy spirits, and Robin Goodfellow was believed in perhaps as steadfastly as any person mentioned in the catechism. The title betrays how slight were the obligations that Shakespeare was willing to assume for the characters and happenings of the piece. Quite evidently it would be impossible to found a play upon the loves or fortunes of a Titania and an Oberon; these cannot be made more than incidental to the drama as a whole, however spectacular the mischief they are to do. So the dramatisation, based upon the occasion of the nuptials of the great Theseus, king or "duke" of Athens in the heroic age, and Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons, belongs to a world much higher than the plane of elves, higher almost than the human. As the maximum consummation, in part fancifully conceived, we desire that the felicity or comfort of this virtually demigod and demigoddess pair may not be marred by any untoward or ill-advised entertainment. We wish that their union might (*cf.* I. i. 16–19) be solemnised in epic style, or at least with as much

dignity as was ever compassed by the masterpieces of the Athenian stage. Also we are in lively sympathy with Hippolyta, who (I. i. 122) would not have Theseus unrelenting, in the midst of his own happiness, toward other lovers not so fortunate as themselves. By the graciousness of the pair all turns out comedially and well, the ridiculous effort of Bottom and his companions — who are borrowed from England like Dogberry and Verges in *Much Ado* — furnishing the clownish or burlesque components, and focussing the action after the fairy part of the play has been wound up. The majesty and greatness of the Duke's mind, and the divine reserve of Hippolyta's disposition, are brought out in the first paragraphs of Act V, and lift these personages to their superior level, though modern playing does not in general bring this out. The two other pairs of lovers are taken up into their company to furnish audience to the players. There is very palpable satire upon the subjectivity of love in the juice of the flower, and in the fact that Demetrius is not disabused of its charm, but marries Helena on the strength of its influence alone. The makeshift heroine of the play is Helena, and the hero, Demetrius.

*Taming of the Shrew.*

*The Taming of the Shrew* appears to have been adapted from an earlier play, which is still extant. It bears some resemblance to *Much Ado* in that it is laid in Italy, has a double plot, and possesses a heroine that is perhaps echoed in Beatrice of the later play. The summary expedients of Petruchio, as well as their effect upon Katherina, are pretty

largely brought over from the earlier version, and leave in consequence for the student interpretative difficulties unusual in Shakespeare's work. It is certain that to many readers the results seem to be derived without definite or reasonable causation. Petruchio knows that Katherina is a good woman at heart, a little headstrong at the beginning, and now but in small degree responsible for the plight in which he finds her. Katherina knows that Petruchio is a good man, and that he sees through her and likes her; and she is helpless. She has been driven to unfilial and defiant conduct by wrong home treatment until she almost believes herself irredeemably bad. Petruchio saves her in her own despite. The discipline that marriage brings to strong natures, generally in long years of renunciation, is condensed into a fortnight of half-ironic compulsion. The Induction of the earlier play is retained by Shakespeare, who apologetically saves by it the necessity of presenting the piece as a sober or first-hand study in domestic wisdom.

*Twelfth Night* stands as a comedy somewhat apart from the three plays now considered. In it the character of Maria goes well with the women of the preceding; Viola and Olivia rank rather with the women of the tragedies. Incapable of coarse or biting speech, and without wit-combat gifts, Viola is still as strong as Beatrice or Helena or Katherina. She does indeed what none of these could do, recovering her lost lover by charity and gentleness with strategy. Shakespeare seems to

*Twelfth Night.*

have borrowed the main features of the plot from *Gl' Ingannati*, an Italian comedy dating from 1537. The heroine of this play, once beloved by a nobleman, and separated from him by residence in another city, learns that he has so far forgotten her as to pay court to a rich lady of his circle. Disguising herself, she enters his service, and is soon sent to woo as his proxy the new flame. But the lady falls in love with his messenger and rejects him. Shakespeare seems to have been attracted to this plot by the possibilities in the rôle of the heroine, and he has made Viola the most refined and noble woman of all the comedies. Orsino, to suit this part, is conceived as in love with his ideals, as Romeo was, worshipping Olivia as Rosalind was worshipped, afar off. Since Orsino has not yet found his Juliet, he wooes by proxy. He has not quite reached the point, when the course of the play is stopped, of discerning her. But he is already hedged about by the occult and subtle influences of her sex; the strange comfort of Viola's presence and ministries has almost won him to himself. Yet she wooes Orsino with great unselfishness and sympathy, being always ready to yield him on seeing that he has Olivia's affection. She is withal just and true to her rival, though with infinite opportunity to be false. Managing to see Olivia's face, and discovering there beauty perhaps superior to her own, she shows no dislike of it or its possessor. She is as gentle and optimistic as Imogen, and as self-poised. There is somewhat of the same comic satire as is seen in the former plays. Olivia is made to reject

the Duke because of his effeminate advances, but falls in love with his page, who is a woman. Later her affections are transferred without difficulty to Sebastian, who can scarcely be of larger proportions or more manly in appearance than his sister. There is some rough comedy, to keep the sentiment parts of the play from seeming too strained and trivial. Sir Toby is provided in part to insure physical means for the arrest and immurement of Malvolio. Without the egotism and sanctimony of this last character, the main business of the play would seem too bald. The drinking and maudlin talk and singing, the jokes of the clown, and the countrified graces of Sir Andrew's dancing make the background on which the love matters of the people of quality fail to look absurd. It is the most refined of all the comedies, and mingles comedy, humour, and pathos in an unwonted combination.

*As You Like It* is perhaps the most pleasing, in the popular judgment, of all the comedies. It seems to have been written in a vision of sheer romance, centring about Arden, home of the Robin Hoods in France, and inspired by Lodge's novel of *Rosalynde*. It is an idyl of the forest, of emancipated, unconventional existence; and the main incidents are managed without much reason or probability. Rosalind is the impersonation of pure womanhood, unweighted with philosophy, or heavy, self-conscious declamation, and saved by adversity from the vice of selfishness. Orlando is well born, but reared meanly as a rustic, and so enabled to over- *As You Like It.*

match the great wrestler in brawn. He is endowed for victory, that he may win the admiration and love of Rosalind. In Arden the differences wrought by conventionalism disappear; Orlando is as acceptable as anybody. There have been cruel banishments and wrongs, these seeming in the atmosphere of palaces but incidental, inevitable. In the primitive simplicity of Arden they look monstrous. Touchstone keeps the echo of the old life well in our ears, yet with true fool consistency matches with a wench of sheepfolds. Touchstone is the most genial and polished of all clowns, always content to spare his tongue rather than sting a sufferer. The deep and searching glimpses of life under varying conditions constitute the chief charm of the piece. It seems not to have been written for the sake of any particular idea or character, and lacks the rough comedy of preceding plays.

*The Merchant of Venice.*

In *The Merchant of Venice* Shakespeare's interest appears to have centred in Shylock as the typic sixteenth-century Jew. The study shows remarkable insight into the Hebrew consciousness, and goes far toward alleviating various Christian prejudices against the race. To the superficial reader Shylock has too often seemed nothing but the impersonation of greed and malice. The story of the bond, and of the lady of Belmont, who donned the garb of a lawyer and rescued the surety, probably attracted the author to this theme. The love part of the play must of course be secondary, since Bassanio is a spendthrift, and cannot be

made much of as a hero. Portia must be clever rather than — like her namesake in the *Julius Cæsar* — great, or we shall regret the match. So, after Shylock, Antonio appears to hold the author's artistic attention, and furnishes the work its name. Cultivated readers in Shakespeare's time perhaps discerned, as we sometimes do not, the extraordinary marks of breeding, of instinctive and unconscious courtesy, with which the play begins. We are inclined to put the piece into the hands of schoolboys, as an approach to Shakespeare. We were wiser to save it till at least the primer of modern gentility has been mastered. No people, no age, has rivalled in generous and high-minded consideration the Venetian aristocracy of the times in question. Nothing short of the noble fellowship, and sympathy, and more than fatherly devotion, that we see in Antonio, could have enabled him to forget how Bassanio had abused his bounty. On no other basis of intercourse and esteem could Antonio have been made, in reason, to subscribe to such a bond. The treatment of Portia, in the matter of the caskets, is exquisite, and reveals again the author's infinite knowledge of woman's nature. The legal conclusions that Shakespeare makes Portia propound in the trial scene have been much criticised, but it is not clear that he intended them to be different from the feminine judgments that they very palpably are. The play is perhaps least satisfying in the repudiation, by Jessica, of her father. Converts from Judaism are not made often in just such fashion. The

second love plot is needed to give substance and dignity, by contrast, to the first.

There are other plays, tragedies as well as comedies, which, were such summarisings helpful, might be added to the list now finished. But there can be little profit, save sometimes as a clew, in anticipating the main conclusions of personal study. All these things may become open secrets to the prepared mind. The gift of insight, which we all use so well outside of books, needs to be quickened by the expert study of a few plays. Any one who can read character in actual life, can learn to read it essentially as well in dramas and novels.

# VIII

## PERSONAL STUDY OF THE PLAYS

It seems scarcely practicable to contribute more toward showing what Shakespeare is, and of what worth he is or may be to the world, in an introductory, provisional view, than has now been done. All great literature, as has been illustrated, is potential, meaning much more than is conveyed or said. Enough has been shown, it is hoped, to make clear how Shakespeare and other masters communicate things that cannot be told. The highest cannot be spoken; but we can be made, by art, to experience it. To bore is to tell, or try to tell, the whole.

There is no way to comprehend Shakespeare with less labour than is requisite to comprehend a single play. To know one of his dramas thoroughly is equivalent to knowing Shakespeare. To have studied the thirty-seven plays superficially, is not to know him or them. It were as wise to attempt studying a picture gallery over in half-a-dozen hurried visits. All the world is aware how long it takes to know a painting. There is as much to learn in a great play of Shakespeare's as in any product of the painter's art. The man whose desire is to come into acquaintance and fellowship with Shakespeare and like master spirits, and is

To know one play is to know Shakespeare.

willing to use his leisure to that end, may achieve his wish. To make this practicable, inductive outlines, in the shape of Questions, have been added to this volume. They reduce the unit of difficulty, yet leave all the ethic and artistic meaning to be discerned independently by the learner. All the discussions, indeed, of the several plays considered, except the first, were intended to prepare for work of this kind. In the case of *Cymbeline*, the rights of the reading public, it is confessed, have been invaded. But this one piece was sacrificed, as was in part explained at the time, for the sake of the rest and of Shakespeare at large. No Questions on this play, consequently, have been appended; but *The Winter's Tale* and *Romeo and Juliet* are analysed entire, and without reference to the partial treatment attempted in earlier pages.

Use of the Questions.

The first desideratum, in the Shakespeare work proposed, is an edition that explains all allusions and all Elizabethan peculiarities in the text. It will not much aid, until some personal comprehension of the given play has been reached, to resort to Shakespeare commentaries and manuals. The impressions of other people cannot be substituted for ours, and were this possible, would only retard the development of insight. The problems of literary discernment are our own, and must be worked out patiently, like school tasks, without copying from our fellows. After we have grasped the essential meanings of a play, it is well to examine the opinions of critics concerning it, and weigh our

The literature of Shakespeare.

conclusions in the light of theirs. There are many helps of this kind, and the number is almost daily increasing. Chief among books for collateral or supplemental reference are the *Variorum* volumes of Mr. Furness, which give not only variant readings of the text, but likewise some of the best notes and comments from all expounders. The list includes, at present writing, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Lear*, *Othello*, *Merchant of Venice*, *As You Like It*, *The Tempest*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *Much Ado*. Among books that may be profitably consulted, after study of a play, are Coleridge's *Lectures on Shakespeare;* Gervinus's *Shakespeare Commentaries;* Dowden's *Shakspere, his Mind and Art;* Hudson's *Shakespeare, his Life, Art, and Characters;* Grant White's *Studies in Shakespeare;* Mrs. Jameson's *Characteristics of Women;* Ulrici's *Shakespeare's Dramatic Art;* Moulton's *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist;* and George Brandes's *Shakespeare, A Critical Study*. Some information concerning great stage interpreters of principal plays can be conveniently reached in Dowden's *Introduction to Shakespeare*, and the reprinted papers of *The Home Circle Library*. For further study of Shakespeare as man and author, J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps's *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*, and Sidney Lee's *Life*, will be most useful. They have been drawn upon largely in the preparation of the biographical sketch in the present volume. For a summary of results in the investigation of Shakespeare's form, especially with reference to

the chronology of certain plays, the Introduction to *The Leopold Shakspere* will be found suggestive and valuable. More extended reading upon this topic would carry the student to the *Transactions of the New Shakspere Society*, and other works not in the scope of the present treatise. Any working Shakespeare library should include further Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar*, Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon*, and Bartlett's *Concordance to Shakespeare*.

# APPENDIX

# APPENDIX

## *OUTLINE QUESTIONS*

## I

## THE WINTER'S TALE

### ACT I

#### SCENE I

1 (*a*) What is the point in having one of these courtiers address the other, by name, at the very beginning? (*b*) How does the author manage to make known to his audience, which is without printed programmes, what countries are represented here? How too does he show to which the courtiers respectively belong? (*c*) What 'difference' (l. 4) between Bohemia and Sicily does Archidamus seem to have in mind?

2 (*a*) Does it appear (ll. 6–8) that Camillo and Archidamus are introduced for their own sakes, or for some other reason? (*b*) What does Archidamus (ll. 9–14) imply as to the character of the entertainment that the Sicilian court has furnished or is furnishing? (*c*) Is there any hint as to whether the entertainment, or the visit, has been prolonged or brief? (*d*) Can you explain why Camillo (ll. 18, 19) seems willing to accept, instead of deprecating, the immoderate acknowledgments tendered by Archidamus?

3 (*a*) What is implied (ll. 23, 24) by Camillo as to the extent to which Bohemia has put himself under obligation to Sicily? (*b*) What purpose, to us, does the rest of his paragraph serve? (*c*) Does there seem to be any reason why Mamillius is mentioned, but not his mother? (*d*) Why is the scene cast in prose? (*e*) Why could not this scene be dispensed with?

SCENE II

1 (*a*) At what time of year (*cf.* i. 6) are we to understand that this play opens? (*b*) In what season, then, must Polyxenes have begun his nine months' stay? (*c*) In the story from which Shakespeare drew, Sicily was the visiting king, and Bohemia the host. Is there any apparent reason why the author has reversed these rôles? (*d*) Which would be the pleasanter country at any time of year? Besides, how far does this absurd lingering of Polyxenes seem due to the character of the man? (*e*) What in the tone or language (ll. 1–9) of the first paragraph would seem meant to be significant as to the strength and caliber of this king?

2 (*a*) Do you think that Leontes, from his reply (ll. 9, 10), expects that his friend will withdraw speedily? (*b*) Do you imagine that Leontes is now exercised for the first time over his friend's visit? With what evident feeling and motive does he speak? (*c*) What is the effect of his utterance upon Polyxenes? (*d*) Why does Polyxenes add to his reply 'I have stay'd to tire your royalty'? (*e*) Is the effect upon Leontes of saying this apparently what he expected?

3 (*a*) Why is the next utterance (l. 16) so curt? (*b*) Why does Leontes, having his wish, propose another week of stay? (*c*) What would have been the harm of letting Polyxenes withdraw, on a day's notice, as he proposes? (*d*) What of Leontes proposing to compromise by making the limit three days and a half? How far is it large-minded and royal?

4 (*a*) How can Polyxenes insist now (ll. 23, 24) that his affairs 'do even drag' him homeward? (*b*) Why does he allude (l. 26) to the charge or expense of his staying? (*c*) Why does Leontes call on the Queen to speak? (*d*) What do you find in the tone and spirit of his words to her? (*e*) Why has she not spoken before?

5 (*a*) Why does the Queen say that she was intending to hold her peace even longer? Do you think this true wholly? (*b*) What means (ll. 31, 32) 'this satisfaction the bygone day proclaim'd'? (*c*) Do you judge, from the next two lines, that she thinks her husband and Polyxenes are merely fencing? (*d*) Is the answer (l. 33) of Leontes literal or ironical?

6 (*a*) Is there any reason apparently why Hermione speaks thus of Polyxenes, and not to him? (*b*) Does she mean to imply, in (ll. 34–37) her next paragraph, that Polyxenes does not care for his family? (*c*) Do you think that he has a wife? (*d*) Why, since she will allow Leontes (ll. 39–42) a month beyond the limit, does she not adventure a larger borrowing?

7 (*a*) On what invitation does Hermione base (ll. 44, 45) her seeming importunities? (*b*) Do you think she wishes to keep Polyxenes from staying? (*c*) Would you have remained on such requests as hers? (*d*) Why does Polyxenes, under such conditions, accede?

8 (*a*) Why does Hermione at once (l. 60) start talk 'of my lord's tricks and yours'? (*b*) Why does she solicit (ll. 65, 66) uncivilly from her friend testimony that her husband was 'the verier wag o' the two'? (*c*) Why does not Leontes talk, and why does she not try to engage him as well as Polyxenes in the new topic? (*d*) Do you think the Queen enjoys the advantage (ll. 80–86) that she soon wins over Polyxenes? Why does she push it?

9 (*a*) Why should Leontes (l. 86) now speak, and in the way he does? (*b*) Does Hermione probably recognise the spirit of the question which he asks? (*c*) What does her husband wish or intend apparently by his next remark? (*d*) Does the rest of the paragraph (ll. 88, 89) seem to go well with what he has just said?

10 (*a*) With what feeling does Hermione take up the last utterance of her husband? (*b*) Does she seem brilliant and facile in the lines (ll. 90–101) that follow? Do you get the impression that she likes wit-combats of this kind? (*c*) Does she seem troubled? (*d*) What is the effect (ll. 101–105) of her words upon Leontes? (*e*) Is what he says wholly genuine, has his feeling altered?

11 (*a*) What does Hermione do when Leontes has said his answer? (*b*) Why does she not prolong the interview that she was called in to save? (*c*) What did Elizabethan etiquette require when a lady wished to turn aside, as here, from some group or station in an audience-room? (*d*) Do you think Shake-

speare expects us to approve Leontes here (ll. 108–119) in what he says? Do you think he intends to make us detest him? Why does he cause us to overhear the King's words?

12 (*a*) Has the smutched nose of Mamillius any influence with us as regards his mother? (*b*) Do you find the King's jealousy wholly unjustifiable up to this point? (*c*) How far are you inclined to blame him for what he goes on (ll. 128–146) to say?

13 (*a*) Does Hermione hear anything of what Leontes is saying to the boy and to himself? (*b*) What apparently (l. 146) has Polyxenes noticed? (*c*) What word in Hermione's reply has stress? (*d*) What does Hermione mean in asking her husband (l. 150) if he is 'moved'? (*e*) How far is Leontes telling (ll. 151–160) the truth?

14 (*a*) What do you infer (l. 155) is the King's age? (*b*) What pleases him (l. 162) in Mamillius's answer? (*c*) Do you see any motive or animus in (ll. 163–165) Leontes's question? (*d*) If the lad's mother were living, would or would not Leontes be likely, in his present mood, to allude to her?

15 (*a*) Why does Leontes now (l. 172) withdraw from his friend and the Queen? (*b*) Why has not Shakespeare had the Queen and Polyxenes withdraw, before this, from the King? (*c*) Why does Hermione (ll. 177, 178) make answer as she does? (*d*) Is it apparent why Mamillius (l. 190) does not go away as bid? (*e*) What is in his mind seemingly that prompts (l. 208) his last words?

16 (*a*) Why has the author withdrawn Mamillius and his mother with Polyxenes? (*b*) What has he accomplished by use of them, and how has Mamillius helped? (*c*) Why does the author not close the scene? (*d*) What explanation of Camillo's presence during what has passed?

17 (*a*) Does Leontes apparently wish or expect Camillo to behave as if he understood what he had heard and witnessed? (*b*) Why does not Camillo so behave? (*c*) What is the result of his attempt to be evasive? (*d*) Do you like this man Camillo? Why? (*e*) How does Leontes first (ll. 235–241, 242–249) attempt to control Camillo? (*f*) Do you think that the King is yet clear as to what he would have Camillo do?

18 (*a*) Does Leontes recommend himself in his open conversation about his Queen? (*b*) What sort of a plot would you expect such a man, in such a state of mind, to make? (*c*) Do you think Camillo respects the Queen, or cares for her welfare? (*d*) Why is Leontes made to speak (ll. 313, 314) of Camillo's advancement, is it for Camillo's sake or ours? (*e*) Why does he consent (ll. 333, 334) to believe, and to do the crime? (*f*) What of the condition that (ll. 335, 336) he requires, is it significant? (*g*) What has been accomplished in this part of the scene? (*h*) Why was this not made into a scene by itself?

19 (*a*) Why does the author have Camillo utter the soliloquy (ll. 351–364) that follows the agreement? (*b*) Why does he (l. 364) refuse to salute Polyxenes? (*c*) Why has the King (ll. 370–375) failed to keep his promise to seem friendly? (*d*) Do you think Camillo intended at first to betray the plot? (*e*) Show how the understanding between him and Polyxenes is evolved. (*f*) Do you recognise any Sicilian, rather than Bohemian, characteristics in Leontes?

20 (*a*) Does Polyxenes show that he has had suspicions of the jealousy that he has caused? (*b*) Does he appear to realise that the Queen may in any manner suffer or be profited by the course he takes? (*c*) Do you feel sure of the reason? (*d*) Do you recognise any Bohemian, rather than Sicilian, characteristics (*cf.* I (*c*), above) in this man? (*e*) Does the scene, all things considered, seem long? (*f*) Does it show marks of haste or condensation anywhere?

## ACT II

### SCENE I

1 (*a*) Do your impressions of Hermione appear to be the same now as in the scene just finished? (*b*) Does Mamillius, now that his nose has had attention, seem to have the same mother that he had before? (*c*) Why is he made (ll. 5, 6) to object to the petting of the First Lady? (*d*) Why is he made (ll. 7–11) to give his observations concerning brows?

2 (*a*) Are boys of Mamillius's age generally found in conversation with their elders? (*b*) Was Mamillius at play with his toys when the scene opened? (*c*) What do you infer from this, and from (l. 22) 'I am for you again'? (*d*) What do you find in the circumstance that this lad seems to tell his mother stories that he has not heard from her? Where does he get them? (*e*) Is there anything significant in the way he holds to his sentence (ll. 29, 30), without restarting, in spite of the interruption?

3 (*a*) Can you see the object of bringing Mamillius and his mother thus together in the foreground? (*b*) What has given Leontes the impulse to come here? (*c*) Why does he bring along his lords? (*d*) What did he think or intend to do on finding Hermione? (*e*) What does he do (ll. 36–53) in the first moments? (*f*) What makes him disappoint himself?

4 (*a*) What action seems to accompany (l. 56) 'Give me the boy'? (*b*) Can you find the motive for this? (*c*) Are you sure as to what lies back (l. 58) of Hermione's inquiry? (*d*) What can have been the reason of the King's paragraph (ll. 64–78) to the lords? (*e*) Why should Hermione answer what is not addressed to her? (*f*) How far does she show excitement or humiliation or grief? (*g*) How would most women, in such a presence, at such a moment, have behaved?

5 (*a*) After Leontes has again spoken, what is prevailingly her feeling? (*b*) Do you take it that Leontes intended, when

he came, to condemn (l. 104) beforehand those who might be minded to speak for her? (*c*) Do you think he intended to apprehend her in just this way? (*d*) What of the force, and the greatness of it, that defeats him thus?

6 (*a*) Is it unwomanly and weak that Hermione should now (ll. 107–115) address the lords? (*b*) Why does she not appeal to them to save her? Can you imagine such a thing happening under present circumstances? (*c*) Why is it that Hermione feels no dread of anything? (*d*) Do you suppose the lords feel any such fear as she is lacking in?

7 (*a*) Does Leontes think (l. 115) that he is kept from speaking? (*b*) Does Hermione feel, and intend to exploit, her supremacy over all the rest? Does she really give honour here to whom honour is due? (*c*) Do you think the King has ever felt the effect of her displacing, silencing personality before? (*d*) Does the subordination that she has effected here seem due to constant forces of personality, or to a new sentiment or mood? (*e*) Does Hermione seem like one who would wish to rule her husband? Do you think her inclined to shrewishness or egotism?

8 (*a*) Why does not Leontes say the things he is so desirous of uttering? Has Hermione really left for him since no pause? (*b*) What do you find in (ll. 116–124) her final paragraph? (*c*) When do you think Leontes gives (l. 125) his order, before or after the Queen has set forth? (*d*) What indeed does his order, or (l. 103) the previous one, really call for? Were this a low criminal, what would his guards be doing or have done? (*e*) What do they do, how do they 'guard' the Queen? (*f*) Why do they not obey the King, and why does he not call them to account for failing to proceed as he intended?

9 (*a*) What has been accomplished so far in this scene? (*b*) Why should not a new scene begin at this point? Does the part of the play that we have had seem self-sufficing or preliminary? (*c*) Which of the lords that now speak is specifically our proxy? (*d*) What comes of the dialogue, up to l. 180, between Leontes and his lords? (*e*) What is the effect on us, as regards both Leontes and the Queen, of knowing that the case has been referred to Delphi? (*f*) What does Leontes intend (l. 197) apparently to say in public?

SCENE II

1 (*a*) Would it have made any difference in our impressions if Paulina had come with a lady instead of this 'Gentleman' for her usher? (*b*) What do you say of her manner or bearing with the Gaoler; is it unwomanly? (*c*) Why does Shakespeare have the Gaoler require that the attendants (l. 13, 14) be withdrawn? (*d*) Why does Paulina say (l. 26) 'a *boy*'?

2 (*a*) Why does not Paulina see the incongruity (ll. 31–35 and 37–39) between the two things she proposes? (*b*) Do you think the Queen will take kindly to the idea of having her child carried to the King? (*c*) If she does, how will you explain her yielding? (*d*) Does Paulina seem of stronger will and presence than Hermione? (*e*) Do your impressions of Hermione seem to have undergone any change since Paulina appeared? Can you explain what has really happened?

3 (*a*) Do the think the birth of this daughter, in the jail, has made any change in Hermione's feeling about her troubles? (*b*) Would it not have been better, dramatically, if the author had permitted us to see the interior of the prison? (*c*) Why does not the Gaoler, as a matter of course, propose to get permission from the King (ll. 57, 58) to pass the child? (*d*) How is it that Hermione, though disgraced and helpless, has (l. 64) the Gaoler's sympathy? (*e*) How do you think the feeling about her is in Sicily? (*f*) What is this scene for?

SCENE III

1 (*a*) What do the first six words tell us? (*b*) Is the reason that the King gives the right one? (*c*) Why does he wish Hermione destroyed? (*d*) What word in l. 11 has stress? Who has told the boy the dishonour of his mother? (*e*) What means 'fix'd the shame on't in himself'? (*f*) How fully does Leontes seem to realise the meaning of what he is made to tell us here?

2 (*a*) Who is meant (l. 18) by *him?* (*b*) Has Paulina chanced upon a good hour to appear with the child before the King? (*c*) Do you think that the author has prepared Paulina and the King especially in order that her visit may be successful? (*d*) Do you imagine that Paulina's voice is soft, and that she

uses low tones in the King's anteroom? (*e*) How far is she happy in the selection of an opening topic?

3 (*a*) Can you think of any reason why the King has charged that Paulina, more than other court women, should be kept away? (*b*) Do you think that Antigonus, speaking (l. 45) of 'your displeasure's peril and on mine,' was wholly serious? (*c*) Does the King appear capable, even in his present mood, of appreciating the humour of it? (*d*) Do you think Antigonus really proud (l. 50) of his henpecked condition? (*e*) Can you explain how it is that Paulina has never learned the existence or use of such a thing as tact?

4 (*a*) Why has the author made Paulina such a person as will drive the King, as at once (l. 61) happens, to force her from his presence? (*b*) The guards again, as when bidden in the first scene (l. 103) of this act to remove Hermione, fail to obey. Is it for like reasons? (*c*) Do you think any contrast is intended? (*d*) In what attitude do you see Paulina (ll. 63, 64) in her defiance of the King's men? (*e*) Do you understand how she can propose to leave the child? (*f*) Which would engage your own attention chiefly, were the scene actual, at this moment, Paulina and the soldiers, or the child?

5 (*a*) How does the action of the King intensify the situation? (*b*) Why does the author wish the excitement and confusion enhanced? (*c*) Was or was not the offence implied in 'Traitors' (l. 72) likely to be considered serious in Elizabethan times? (*d*) How do you think Antigonus looks when Paulina (ll. 76–79) prevents his obedience to the King's command? Why does not he speak? (*e*) Why is not the King infuriated at his hesitation?

6 (*a*) In whose power now is the child? Would Paulina be permitted, if she willed, to carry it back to its mother? (*b*) What has been accomplished thus far in this scene? (*c*) Does Paulina really intend to exasperate the King further? (*d*) Do you think the King's statement (ll. 90, 91), which is not denied, a true one? (*e*) How can the King endure Paulina's talk (ll. 97–108) about the child? (*f*) Can you see why the author makes her venture it? (*g*) Why does the King allow himself to be baffled thus long of his purpose?

7 (*a*) Where is the child this while? (*b*) Do you believe the King's threat (l. 114) means anything? (*c*) Are you concerned more, at this moment, for the child or for Paulina? (*d*) In the inevitable moment that is approaching, what do you think Paulina will do? Will she make good (ll. 62, 63) her threat? (*e*) Was there any special point in Elizabethan times in (l. 121) 'on your allegiance'? (*f*) Is there any effect from using it in this case?

8 (*a*) What, from Paulina's language (l. 125), do we know is taking place? (*b*) Is or is not change indicated (ll. 127 and 130) in 'What needs these hands' 'So, so'? (*c*) Why does she, in the last of these lines, say 'we'? (*d*) Why has she not resisted the effort to eject her? (*e*) Has her failure to do so made us note and feel the abandonment of the child more fully?

9 (*a*) What further step has now been taken in this scene? (*b*) Does the King believe what he says (l. 131) to Antigonus about his wife's behaviour? (*c*) Why has he not proceeded against the child's life till now? (*d*) What would you be willing to have happen to the child, provided it be saved (ll. 132–134) from the fate demanded by the King? (*e*) How far do you suppose the author intended and expected this feeling? (*f*) Is there any justice, or was there, according to Elizabethan notions, in making a man responsible for the conduct of his wife? (*g*) Why does not the King first punish Paulina herself for her defiance and disrespect?

10 (*a*) Has or has not the First Lord spoken before in this scene? (*b*) What qualities do you discern in him? (*c*) What motives prompt him to cross the King at this most dangerous moment? (*d*) Why does the King yield? (*e*) Why should he not now turn to some other of his lords or servants? (*f*) Why does he extort in advance the oath?

11 (*a*) If Antigonus had not been henpecked, do you or do you not think he would have accepted such a commission? (*b*) Can you understand how he can repeat (ll. 184, 185) his oath, yet declare that immediate death had been more merciful? Can you comprehend the nature, the consciousness of such a man? (*c*) Do you think the character unreal? (*d*) Do the words of Antigonus (ll. 185–187) to the child make the moment harder or easier for us to bear? (*e*) Does the announcement of

the messengers make or not make the exit of Antigonus with the child more practicable to ourselves? Why?

12 (*a*) What is the motive (l. 197) of the messengers' hastening? (*b*) Does it seem likely that they have hurried also before arriving at the shores of this island? (*c*) If the oracle is to determine the truth of the King's accusations, why does he summon a session? (*d*) How or why, while the Queen lives, is the King's heart (l. 206) a burthen to him? (*e*) Do you realise how far the author has advanced the plot, and how sternly he has controlled our sympathies, since the opening of this scene? Explain.

## ACT III

### SCENE I

1 (*a*) Why are these messengers made to be talking yet, even in Sicily, of their experiences at Delphi? (*b*) Is there any differentiation attempted in the characters of the two men? (*c*) Do they or do they not know the purport of the response they carry? (*d*) Do you think it fairly possible to question whether they have genuine despatches from Delphi or not? (*e*) Do you think, from their call (l. 21) for fresh horses, that they have not yet started? Is there Folio authority for the setting of the scenes? (*f*) What is the purpose of this scene? Does it serve other purposes than one?

### SCENE II

1 (*a*) Do you take it that in Sicily the King usually opened the sessions in person? (*b*) Does he seem to show humiliation, or regret, or some other feeling? (*c*) Has the author presented Hermione and Paulina before? (*d*) Does the author seem to need Paulina here in the same manner as before? (*e*) What points in character in the two women are there in common?

2 (*a*) Does Hermione's strength, in her first paragraph of defence, seem or not seem unwomanly? Does or does not the diction seem masculine? (*b*) What qualities of greatness in sentiment and spirit are apparent in it? (*c*) How much of imperial presuming, of undeference like Paulina's to the King's place and person, can you find in it? (*d*) Does Hermione seem changed in any way since her imprisonment? (*e*) Does Leontes rise in repose and dignity in (ll. 55–58) his first interruption? Why? (*f*) How far does Hermione lose repose and dignity in attempting to reply to the strictures of her husband?

3 (*a*) After Hermione resumes her defence do you discern further qualities in (ll. 62–77) her speaking of Polyxenes and Camillo? (*b*) Can you imagine what Leontes has to base (ll. 78,

79) his new innuendo on? (*c*) Can you explain why Hermione does not give way to vituperation and grief on his reference (l. 88) to her babe? (*d*) How can Leontes publicly prejudge (ll. 91, 92) her guilty when he has promised a just and open trial? What feelings or forces compel him to act in this way? (*e*) What effect does his threatening have upon his wife? (*f*) What new sentiments and qualities do you find in (ll. 92–117) her paragraph at large?

4 (*a*) Is the First Lord officially entitled to speak in this court? (*b*) Is this the point in the proceedings where it was intended that the oracle should be introduced? (*c*) Can you explain why, in Hermione's reference (ll. 120–124) to her father, there is no thought of appealing to him for justice or protection? (*d*) Do you understand that this paragraph is said in the hearing of the whole court? (*e*) What need here of a paragraph at all?

5 (*a*) What officer apparently administers the oath to Cleomenes and Dion? (*b*) Is it dramatically well that we have seen them before? Why? (*c*) Is there seemingly any reason why Leontes is made, by (l. 132) his order, to participate in this formal moment of suspense? (*d*) Was it in accord with court etiquette for a group of lords like this one to break out, in anticipation of their chief, in a demonstration? (*e*) Are they, or are they not, sure on which side the enthusiasm of the King will vent itself? (*f*) Which seems the ampler feeling, Hermione's or the lords'?

6 (*a*) What does the King mean (l. 142) by 'proceed'? (*b*) Can you explain how a servant could presume (l. 143) to interrupt the august sessions, summoned for the trial of a queen, by such an hysterical intrusion? (*c*) What is the meaning of 'mere conceit and fear,' exactly what has caused the death of the prince? (*d*) How far are we to understand, from the King's acknowledgment (ll. 147, 148), that he has been insincere all the while? (*e*) Why does not Hermione swoon immediately on knowledge of Mamillius's death? (*f*) Do you think it or not think it hard for Leontes to say (ll. 150–154 and 154–173) what he says in the face of all the sessions and the lords? Why does not the author have him confess his villany in an aside? (*g*) To what extent are you changing your opinion of the man?

7 (*a*) Does the language of Paulina, on reëntering, seem unaffected and natural? Has her talk, the matter or the manner of it, at any time seemed mannish, masculine? (*b*) How would you name her most salient characteristics? (*c*) What effect is produced on us, as regards the King, by (ll. 180–200) her invectives? (*d*) Should you or should you not think, from (ll. 201–203) the manner of her reference, that Hermione is really dead? (*e*) Why does not Leontes say something? (*f*) What do you say of the climax (ll. 208–215) to which she carries her assault?

8 (*a*) What is the effect of having the King beg that she go on? (*b*) Does the First Lord appear (l. 218) to assume that the Queen is already dead? (*c*) How does he rank with the men of the play so far? (*d*) Can you account now for Paulina's tears, and her regret and asking for forgiveness? (*e*) What is the effect of this as regards her, and as regards the King? (*f*) Do you think that her tears are in part (ll. 231, 232) for the loss of her husband? (*g*) Why has Shakespeare put this in? (*h*) How long ago apparently did she give her husband up?

9 (*a*) Why should Leontes deprecate the pity of Paulina? (*b*) What do you say of the penance he proposes, is it manly? (*c*) What are now your feelings toward this man? (*d*) Can you explain why he now wishes (ll. 235, 243) to be led to the bodies of his queen and son by Paulina, and not by some one of his lords?

### SCENE III

1 (*a*) Has Antigonus any nurse or maids of honour with him to care for the babe? (*b*) How has the business that he has in hand impressed apparently the crew? Do you think they know what child it is and what is the purpose fully of their voyage? (*c*) Why does not the mention (ll. 12, 13) of the creatures of prey seem to stir Antigonus? (*d*) Do you think you can bear to see him expose the child? (*e*) Why does the author make Antigonus to have had (ll. 17–37) the dream of the child's mother? Does it help him or us? (*f*) How do you explain his thinking the Queen guilty? He did not once think so. (*g*) What do you say of his manner of parting with the child? How far is it consistent with his cruel, unwavering purpose?

2 (*a*) What is meant (l. 47) by 'character'? (*b*) And what means 'these'? And how may they 'both breed thee, and still rest thine'? (*c*) Why does the author show us this man pursued, while the child stays safe? (*d*) Is it, or is it not, removed from our sight? Why? (*e*) Do you find this episode thus far tragical? Can you explain why? (*f*) Why does the author have Antigonus perish?

3 (*a*) Why does the text change to prose? (*b*) How much contrast, dramatic and other, between the foregoing and the situation now begun? Would the shepherd, dressed as in Shakespeare's days, look more rustic or less than such a figure now? How would the court attire of Antigonus compare with the dress of the gentry in present times? (*c*) What time of the year has now been reached? (*d*) Does the shepherd seem drawn more by his fondness for children, or by the rich mantle and other articles that he sees? (*e*) How does the Clown look and act, when he appears, to call out (l. 83) his father's question? Do you think he was quaking?

4 (*a*) Which story of marvel gets precedence of the other? Why? (*b*) What means (ll. 130, 131) 'Let my sheep go,' and what state of mind does this measure to us? (*c*) Why does the shepherd wish to know (l. 138) 'what' the stranger is? (*d*) Why is the author at pains to make us know that the body of Antigonus shall have burial? (*e*) Can you explain why the last part of this scene is comedial, though it deals with death?

## ACT IV

### SCENE I

1 (*a*) What do you imagine was the make-up of the actor taking the part here of Father Time? (*b*) How far do you think the effect of his utterance, if the personification seemed complete, would approach the hallucination that the author wished? (*c*) What means (l. 8) *self-born* hour? What may we say that each hour is usually born of? (*d*) From the mention (ll. 22–25) of Florizel and Perdita, what may we infer this setting forward of the plot is for?

2 (*a*) How much of Father Time's paragraph is properly Chorus talk? (*b*) This scene has been pronounced spurious by certain critics. What signs of Shakespeare's hand and mind are discerned about it? (*c*) What marks and features seem to fix it below the standard of Shakespeare and of the play?

### SCENE II

1 (*a*) Why is not Polyxenes willing that Camillo should at least go on a visit to Sicily? (*b*) How does it chance that the King's mind turns (ll. 28, 29) to thoughts of his son so suddenly? (*c*) Is it usual for a prince, leaving no knowledge of his whereabouts, to be absent from court three days? How far would it be possible to do this without resorting to disguises? (*d*) Whose wealth, in the King's suspicion (ll. 44–46), apparently, has made the homely shepherd rich? (*e*) What has transformed the shepherd, from very nothing to an unspeakable estate, and how long since did the change, as it would seem, take place?

2 (*a*) How can Camillo (l. 48) have heard of the shepherd's daughter? Is he perhaps (*cf.* ll. 36, 37) especially intimate with Florizel, or is he perhaps, his guardian? (*b*) What do you think of the King's plan of reaching a conversation with the shepherd? Why does he not summon the man to court?

(*c*) Shakespeare evidently wants Camillo along (ll. 57, 58) at the coming interview. Do you or do you not consider that he has, by having the King magnify a small matter, artistically prepared for it? (*d*) Why is the scene cast in prose?

SCENE III

1 (*a*) How is Autolycus dressed? (*b*) Where was the family linen (l. 5) dried, in Shakespeare's day, after washing? (*c*) If the first three stanzas are intended to show the character of this fellow, what is the interruption (ll. 13, 14) for? (*d*) What does Autolycus mean (ll. 23, 24) about his 'traffic,' and the 'lesser linen'? (*e*) What does he mean (l. 27) by 'caparison,' and (ll. 28, 29) 'gallows and knock are too powerful'? (*f*) Why does he cry out 'A prize!'?

2 (*a*) What does Autolycus mean (l. 36) by 'if the springe hold'? (*b*) Why does not the Clown see Autolycus? (*c*) What is to be judged, from (ll. 34, 35) 'fifteen hundred shorn,' as to the extent of the shepherd's holdings? (*d*) What tastes do you discern, in what the Clown says of his sister, that you would not look for in a shepherd's daughter? What especially does he mean in (l. 43) 'she lays it on'? (*e*) What does the Clown do, as (l. 54) he makes his outcry?

3 (*a*) What does Autolycus get the Clown to do? (*b*) What does he mean in (l. 74) 'O, good sir, *tenderly*, O'? (*c*) Why is he so unwilling that the Clown should think of giving him money? (*d*) Whom is Autolycus describing (ll. 91–93) as his assailant? (*e*) Why is he disposed to decline (l. 123) further kindness from the Clown? (*f*) Is it, or is it not, to the credit (ll. 13, 14) of Prince Florizel that this man has been driven from the court?

SCENE IV

1 (*a*) What differences in imaginative and in practical quality between Florizel's and Perdita's first paragraphs to each other? (*b*) What is Perdita's meaning in (ll. 12–14) 'I should blush To see you so attired, sworn, I think, To show myself a glass'? (*c*) How does the author manage to cover, with somewhat of plausibility, the rather remarkable 'extremes' of dress that

we see here? (*d*) What purpose is Florizel's next utterance (ll. 14–16) made to serve? (*e*) How far do you think Perdita, from her second paragraph, willing to advance her station?

2 (*a*) What 'difference' (l. 17) probably does Perdita suppose divides them? (*b*) How has the Prince been able, in such proximity to the palace, to keep his identity from the shepherd folk he is now to meet? (*c*) Why should Perdita, being, as she must suspect, beautiful, feel uncomfortable in any finery? (*d*) What do you say of Florizel's way of reassuring her in his next paragraph? (*e*) How much does it weigh with Perdita? (*f*) Why is not his next argument of better potency?

3 (*a*) What makes Florizel sure (l. 53) of Perdita's ability to entertain 'sprightly'? (*b*) Why does the shepherd scold Perdita, at sight, for neglecting guests that are but just approaching? (*c*) In what sense, under the circumstances, is it true that she is (l. 62) retired? (*d*) How do you suppose that Polyxenes and Camillo have disguised themselves? (*e*) What is probably now the real age of the King?

4 (*a*) How does Perdita chance to think of flowers, in this moment of embarrassment, as a means of welcome? (*b*) What is the meaning (l. 76) of 'grace and remembrance'? (*c*) What does it signify that a shepherd girl of sixteen years greets guests like these with such a formula? (*d*) What do you say of the excuse, after she is reminded of her slip, that she attempts? (*e*) Is there any point of character, moral or mental, in her ready acceptance (l. 97) of Polyxenes's argument? (*f*) Why does she not yield to the obligation of the principle if it is true? Is there other than a woman's reason?

5 (*a*) What do you say of the flowers that (ll. 103–106) she next bestows, and the manner of bestowing? (*b*) Which stands in subordination to the other, at this point, the shepherd girl to the King, or the opposite? Why? (*c*) What would be the natural effect of such a compliment as (ll. 109, 110) Camillo's, pronounced by a veteran courtier, upon an unsophisticated country maid? (*d*) Whom does she now (l. 112) address? And what do you say of the mind, the vision that finds expression for itself, even under embarrassment, in such lines (ll. 115–

127) as follow? (*e*) What is Perdita's meaning in ll. 134, 135, and what prompts her saying it?

6 (*a*) After the girls from the neighbouring farms take (l. 132) the flowers, what becomes of them and of the swains? (*b*) What do you say (ll. 135–146) of Florizel's compliment? (*c*) What, of Perdita's response? (*d*) Do you think, that, were Perdita aware that the King's son wished to make her Queen of Bohemia, she would consent? Why? (*e*) What will be necessary to ensure the willingness that we can guess must be forthcoming? (*f*) Do any of the guests overhear what they have been saying? (*g*) Where do Florizel and Perdita (ll. 153, 154) now go?

7 (*a*) How do we find that Perdita (ll. 156–159 and 159–161) has impressed the visitors from the palace? (*b*) What does Camillo mean (l. 161) by 'queen of curds and cream'? (*c*) Do you imagine there is any difference between the dancing of Perdita and her lover and of the rest? (*d*) Why do you think the author introduces this dance? (*e*) Does the shepherd talk (ll. 168–176) of his daughter's lover and their loves as you would expect such a man to do? Is there anything to be explained? (*f*) What does the shepherd, in his last allusion (ll. 178–180), mean?

8 (*a*) Why has the servant (l. 181) come to his master about the pedler? (*b*) What of the popularity of such ballads as are now shown, and what of the importance of pedlers like this one, among English country-folk of Shakespeare's day? (*c*) What is significant (l. 215) in Perdita's warning? (*d*) Is the talk of Dorcas and Mopsa (ll. 239–243) better or worse than might have been expected of shepherd girls like these? Why is it given here? (*e*) What point in having Perdita's brother upbraid them?

9 (*a*) Why is not Perdita interested in either the ballads or the finery? (*b*) Autolycus is a character supplied by Shakespeare to the borrowed plot; can you see why it was needed? (*c*) What do you take it that the shepherd and Polyxenes (ll. 316, 317) are in 'sad talk' over? What is the latter satisfying himself about? (*d*) Does the dance of twelve Satyrs serve any other purpose than of dramatic embellishment? (*e*) How much has been thus far accomplished in this scene?

10 (*a*) Why does the diction change now (l. 353) to verse? (*b*) Do you find any sarcasm (ll. 353–366) in the King's first words to his son? What seemingly does he intend? (*c*) Is there anything in Florizel's answer that would tend to incense his father? (*d*) What similarly in his next paragraph but one? (*e*) Do you think Camillo's feeling, from what (l. 389) he says, the same as the King's? (*f*) Is there anything to be noted (ll. 390–393) in Perdita's answer?

11 (*a*) Is this (ll. 393–396) a ceremony of any moment? (*Cf.* p. 248.) (*b*) Does it seem (ll. 403–412) from the King's ironical inquiries, and (ll. 412–414) Florizel's reply, that the presence of the groom's father was imperative at the ceremony of a precontract? (*c*) Show how the King's rage evolves itself. (*d*) Is he angered specifically by Perdita? (*e*) Why does he propose (l. 435) to destroy her beauty? What does his feeling show? (*f*) Why was it necessary for the author to get Polyxenes so angry here? (*g*) To do this, has he or has he not been obliged to do violence to the character?

12 (*a*) What qualities do you find (ll. 451–460) in Perdita's comments? (*b*) What should Florizel, if he does not intend (l. 456) to yield to Perdita's pleading, do? Is he in doubt? (*c*) Do you find any character symptoms in (ll. 460, 461) what Camillo says to the shepherd? Does he think the shepherd to blame? (*d*) Why does not Perdita reply (ll. 470–472) to her father? (*e*) Why does Perdita (l. 474) 'look so upon' Florizel? And why does he ask, under the circumstances, the question? (*f*) Do you think the author meant anything by the name *Florizel?*

13 (*a*) Why did not Camillo withdraw with the King? (*b*) What starts Perdita (l. 484) again? (*c*) How far do you consider Camillo loyal to Polyxenes, who confides in him completely, at this point? (*d*) What influences him most? (*e*) Show how the disobedience evolves a plan. (*f*) What need of the awkward drawing (l. 516) of Perdita aside? (*g*) Can you explain how Camillo can treasonably aid the lovers? Does he propose to keep the King unaware of his conduct?

14 (*a*) How do you account for Perdita's confident answer (ll. 585–587) to Camillo, who should stand for the great world to

her? (*b*) Why, at last (ll. 593, 594), should she blush at compliments from him? (*c*) Why again does the author resort (l. 604) to drawing his actors aside? (*d*) Why is it necessary that Autolycus should tell (ll. 605–630) what he has been doing, and at such length? (*e*) Does Camillo really think that letters from Leontes (l. 634) shall *satisfy* Polyxenes? (*f*) What clothing does Florizel exchange with Autolycus?

15 (*a*) What does Autolycus (ll. 699, 700) mean by 'more matter'? (*b*) What at last have the shepherd and his son got through their heads? (*c*) What do they propose to do, and from what motive? (*d*) What are the air and manner of Autolycus as (l. 736) he challenges the shepherd and the Clown? (*e*) What is he expecting to do? (*f*) Why does he not send these men on to the King, and win a larger reward than he can expect from the Prince? (*g*) Is it probable that Florizel wore a sword, that Autolycus now shows? (*h*) Of what use is the exchange of clothing to Florizel?

16 (*a*) Why does the author have Autolycus (ll. 753–763) exploit his clothing and manners before the shepherds? (*b*) How does he get these men to go with him? (*c*) Why should the fellow, with court clothes on, wish (l. 856) to 'look upon' the hedges as he goes toward the wharf? (*d*) What further use, since the festival, is Shakespeare putting Autolycus to? (*e*) Remembering his gifts, and his career at court, do you find the character comprehensible? (*f*) How closely does Perdita seem now to belong to her old friends? Why?

17 (*a*) What has been accomplished in this scene? (*b*) Why did not the author divide it?

## ACT V

### SCENE I

1 (*a*) Do you think it would be or not be an easy problem, were you writing the play, to introduce Leontes again? (*b*) Has the author chosen an advantageous moment and situation? Why? (*c*) What point in having Cleomenes and Dion the chief spokesmen here? (*d*) How do you find Leontes disposed toward the purpose they have in mind? (*e*) How does Paulina chance to be here, among the men, with no companions of her own sex? (*f*) What is the effect of the manner and matter (ll. 12–16) of her first paragraph?

2 (*a*) Which way go your sympathies in the argument between Dion and Paulina? (*b*) What proof of the King's self-discipline and contrition in (ll. 49–54) his words to Paulina? (*c*) What effect does the King's committing his future to Paulina's keeping have on our conception of his character? (*d*) Show how the author brings the King plausibly to such consent. (*e*) Would it have done as well to postpone, until (l. 84) the entry of the Prince, what has now been done in this scene? Why?

3 (*a*) Why does the Gentleman stop (ll. 86, 87) to speak of Perdita while giving the important news? (*b*) How has Florizel's idea of pranking her up (IV. iv. 10) in court clothing assisted, materially, her entry at her father's court? What sort of a youth was it necessary to make Florizel, in order to bring this about? (*c*) Why should Paulina object (ll. 95–103) to the Gentleman's enthusiasm? How does he chance to have celebrated Hermione in verse? (*d*) Why is Paulina made to administer Job's comfort (ll. 115–118) to the King? (*e*) Is it clear why the King does not deal with her, in such moments, in a tone of more authority?

4 (*a*) What do we now know (l. 126) was Mamillius's age at the opening of the play? (*b*) What do you say of the King's

impressions of Florizel? (*c*) And what of his impressions of Perdita? Is it her beauty, or her presence, her dignity, that strikes him? (*d*) Do you think Perdita has ever realised the difference between her own strength of mind and Florizel's? (*e*) Why does he say (l. 138) 'command,'—why should not 'consent' have seemed a sufficient stretching of the truth? (*f*) Why does the author have Florizel tell so many valiant falsehoods concerning his 'wife' and her family to the King? (*g*) After accepting Perdita creditably as a princess, why is not Leontes startled and scandalised (ll. 180–185) at the amended news?

5 (*a*) Can you explain why Perdita has not shown sorrow for her father (l. 202) till now? (*b*) How can Florizel (ll. 208, 209) palter in answer to the very serious question of the King? (*c*) How is it (l. 215) with Perdita now? (*d*) What makes Leontes so strangely complaisant (ll. 223, 224) toward a maid of very uncertain origin? (*e*) Is Paulina really afraid (ll. 224–227) that Leontes will forget his years? (*f*) Who must, of the long separated kings, make the advances now?

SCENE II

1 (*a*) Why are the reconciliation and the identification of Perdita's belongings not shown? (*b*) What of the effectiveness of the means the author uses in substitution for direct enactment? (*c*) Does Shakespeare mean that ballad-makers (l. 28) can say great meanings better than poets? What is the truth concerning the ballad elements in our literature? (*d*) What does the Third Gentleman's reference (l. 40) to 'the majesty of the creature' make clear to us? (*e*) Do you think that we have Shakespeare's or the Third Gentleman's estimate (l. 106–108) of Julio Romano's merits? (*f*) What word has stress in (l. 113) the first clause of the Second Gentleman's last paragraph?

2 (*a*) What means (ll. 135, 136) 'blossoms of their fortune'? What has been done to them? (*b*) Do you think Shakespeare intends any satire upon the pretensions of rank in certain of the following paragraphs? (*c*) What of the Clown's attempt to reform Autolycus? (*d*) In what sense does Autolycus insist upon taking the Clown's phrase, 'tall fellow of thy hands'? (*e*) What has been accomplished in this scene?

SCENE III

1 (*a*) Has the Clown secured admittance, for Autolycus among his 'kindred,' to the group who are here to see the picture? Is he himself or his father among the number? (*b*) How does the author manage, at the outset, to make us understand that Leontes has not entered Paulina's house before? (*c*) Why was it well and necessary to do this? (*d*) What do you say of the strength and speed by which this scene proceeds to its main business? (*e*) What do you say of the dramatic effect of the silence (l. 20), after the curtain is drawn, and of Paulina's calling attention to this effect of what is seen?

2 (*a*) What feelings do you find (ll. 23–29) in Leontes now? (*b*) What do you say (ll. 42–46) of Perdita's responsiveness? Why should she venture, with such people in such a place, to be so demonstrative? (*c*) Why does not Paulina allow her to kiss her mother's hand? (*d*) Why does Camillo (l. 49) speak of 'sorrow' here? (*e*) What is Polyxenes' attitude or action in the next paragraph? (*f*) Is Paulina surprised (ll. 56–59) at the effect of her device? Why should she be?

3 (*a*) Do you think Hermione moves of purpose, or because she cannot control her agitation at her husband's tears? (*b*) What is the effect upon Leontes? (*c*) Do you conclude from his question (l. 63) that he suspects? (*d*) Does Polyxenes (ll. 65, 66) see what he sees? (*e*) Why does Leontes say (l. 71) 'twenty years'? (*f*) Do you think the rest of the company (ll. 74–80) now share Leontes' and Paulina's understanding, or how nearly have they reached it?

4 (*a*) Why does not (ll. 84, 85) Perdita yet divine the situation? (*b*) What was the feeling of the times concerning witchcraft? (*c*) What was the belief of James I touching such matters? (*d*) By the way, does there seem to be any possible suggestion of James I in the character of this Leontes? (*e*) Why should the King forbid (ll. 97, 98) conscientious scruples and obedience to them?

5 (*a*) What of the dramatic interest (l. 98) of this moment, as the music is played softly? (*b*) Why does Hermione hesitate to descend? How long seemingly is the delay? (*c*) What ap-

pears (l. 104) to have been the effect of her first movements? (*d*) To whom is 'start not' said, and to whom 'do not shun'? (*e*) What pause do the words of Paulina cover? (*f*) Which moves toward the other?

6 (*a*) What is evident (l. 111) as to Hermione's feeling? (*b*) Why does not the author have her speak at once? (*c*) Show how Paulina's presence is made useful in these situations. (*d*) Do you think Perdita kneels (l. 119) a second time? Why is it necessary that Hermione be asked to turn and regard her? (*e*) Has or has not Hermione known till now that Perdita is found?

7 (*a*) What do you say of Hermione's language to her daughter? Is it wanting in dignity and grace? (*b*) What do you imagine is Hermione's expression and pose as she says this? (*c*) Where is the climax of this scene? (*d*) Is it natural that Paulina should call attention (ll. 130–135) to her lone condition? (*e*) What need for the comedial touch of matching her with Camillo? (*f*) How is the author managing the descent from his climax?

8 (*a*) What prompts from Leontes his pleading (l. 147) 'look upon my brother'? (*b*) Why has Florizel (ll. 149–151) been left unrecognised till now? (*c*) Why is Paulina made to 'lead' the company away? (*d*) Where is Camillo's place in it? (*e*) What are your impressions concerning this close of the scene and of the play?

9 (*a*) Do you think that Hermione understood what the part she was asked to play would involve? (*b*) Is this play a tragedy or a comedy? Why? (*c*) Who are the enabling characters in it? (*d*) What new ideas of strength in helplessness, and of the influences of a righteous will, have been brought home to you? (*e*) On what principles is this play based? (*f*) What seem to you to be the ultimate meanings, or lessons, in it?

# II

## ROMEO AND JULIET

### ACT I

#### SCENE I

1 (*a*) What word in the first line has stress? (*b*) What is the real business of these men? (*c*) How does the author apprize us dramatically which house they serve? (*d*) How does he show their antipathy toward the rival family? (*e*) Do you think, or not think, that he intends (ll. 9 and 39, 40) to differentiate the two men in point of bravery?

2 (*a*) Why should it be assumed (l. 45) that either side should 'begin'? (*b*) How can Sampson (l. 48) bite his thumb 'at' the approaching ruffians? (*c*) How does it help (l. 57) to deny what he has done? (*d*) What are the final steps in the evolution of the quarrel? (*e*) Why should the coming (l. 65) of one of Montague's kinsmen alter the case in the way it does? (*f*) Would it have affected an Englishman in the same way? What race differences are apparent here?

3 (*a*) What, up to the present point, seems the object of this scene? (*b*) What do you know at once, from his attempt (l. 72) to part the fighters, is the nature of Benvolio? (*c*) How does Tybalt express himself (l. 73) in *thou?* (*d*) What kind of a man does he register himself, in his actions here, to be? (*e*) Which house thus far seems superior? Do the citizens (l. 81) seem to discriminate?

4 (*a*) How does Capulet chance (l. 81) to be in his gown, and swordless? (*b*) Whom does he command (ll. 82) to fetch his sword? (*c*) Why does Lady Capulet, in a moment of such excitement, call (l. 83) for a 'crutch'? (*d*) Why does Lady Montague (l. 87) hold back her husband? (*e*) Do you

judge from the Prince's rebuke (ll. 89–93) that blood has been shed already? (*f*) Do you take it that this is one (l. 96) of the three brawls, or were they something worse?

5 (*a*) What do you say of the language used by the Prince in dealing with the offenders? Is the stilted, sophomoric quality intended to characterise the Prince, or is it due to the author's faults of style? (*b*) Is this Prince an old man? (*c*) What is the use of showing, at such pains, the savagery of an Italian street fight? (*d*) What need of marks of the Italian nature observed in it? (*e*) How differently would English offenders against the peace and an English magistrate have behaved?

6 (*a*) What is clear (ll. 125–132) as to Romeo's and Benvolio's habits and disposition? Are they dissipated, roystering young men? (*b*) What are your impressions (ll. 137–148, 152–161) of Montague? Is he a coarse man? Does he ever read? (*c*) Do you judge Romeo (ll. 137–146) like him? (*d*) Do you find, or not find, marks of effeminacy in either? (*e*) If these were Englishmen, what different conclusions of character would you form?

7 (*a*) Do you understand that Romeo (l. 166) is not aware of the time of day, or that he has just seen (l. 168) his father? What is the author trying to tell us by these means? (*b*) What further hints and signs (ll. 177–189) in Romeo's first long paragraph? (*c*) Does this man seem really in love? Why? (*d*) Why should he assume (ll. 214–220) that his lady-love cannot be won? (*e*) Do you think him unadvised concerning women? (*f*) Do you think him diffident, unused to best Verona society? (*g*) Can you explain why this young man, exquisitely endowed, and with every privilege, finds life so heavy? (*h*) Is there anything typically Italian in the case?

## SCENE II

1 (*a*) What does Paris seem to have been saying that Capulet now answers by 'but'? (*b*) Why should Capulet accept, as he does (l. 3) personally, the responsibility for disturbances arising, like the last one, without his knowledge or consent? (*c*) What of Paris's interest in the feud, as shown (l. 6) by 'now'? (*d*) What does Capulet mean (l. 8) by 'a stranger in the world'? (*e*) Do

you think Paris wholly acceptable to Capulet? (*f*) What seems to be lacking in him as a lover?

2 (*a*) How is Capulet different, in modes of thought and speech, from Montague? Which is more matter-of-fact and native, which has achieved more refinement? (*b*) What do you say of the author's means of getting rid of Paris and Capulet? (*c*) How should Capulet have given the list to a servant who cannot read? And why should not the servant confess himself unequal to the commission? (*d*) How is the new conversation of Benvolio and Romeo related to their last dialogue? Have they separated since? (*e*) Which was before subordinated to the other? (*f*) Which is subordinated now?

3 (*a*) How does Romeo chance (l. 58) to address the servant? (*b*) Was he bound by customs of the time to notice him? What would Tybalt probably, in Romeo's place, have done? (*c*) How does it happen that it is Romeo and not Benvolio who helps the servant? (*d*) Why does not Romeo at once (ll. 60, 64) assist the fellow? (*e*) Are we to infer anything from the fact that Paris's name is not included in the list?

4 (*a*) Why is the servant now (ll. 76, 78, 80) so evasive to the gentleman who has befriended him? (*b*) Why does he invite Romeo (ll. 84, 85) after all? (*c*) Is it plausible that he should not know whom he is talking with? (*d*) When and how does Benvolio seem to have learned (l. 88) who is Romeo's flame? (*e*) How was it possible for Romeo to think of entering the home of his father's foe? (*f*) What is his motive for so doing? (*g*) What is the object of this scene?

### SCENE III

1 (*a*) Why does the author make Juliet enter to her mother and the Nurse instead of discovering her to us with them? (*b*) Why should not Juliet have appeared (l. 3) at the first call? (*c*) Why should not the mother, instead of the Nurse, answer (l. 6) her first inquiry? (*d*) What makes Lady Capulet dismiss and recall the Nurse? (*e*) Can you explain Juliet's reticence and distantness? Why should she not have been here with her mother and the Nurse all the while?

2 (*a*) How is it that the Nurse can forestall the intended conversation with such matters as she tells? (*b*) What kind of a woman do you see she is? (*c*) How far were social conditions different in Italy, with reference (l. 61) to the Nurse's wish, from now with us? (*d*) Can you explain why Juliet does not speak? (*e*) What subordination is apparent after (l. 65) the mother's question?

3 (*a*) Do you think Juliet's response (l. 66) sincere? (*b*) How does Lady Capulet's argument (ll. 69–73) strike you? Do you think such effect intended? (*c*) Were the older children spoken of (ii. 14) by Capulet, hers? (*d*) How much older than she seems Capulet? (*e*) Was it usual for Italian mothers, intending marriages, to ask such questions as the one (l. 79) now ventured? (*f*) Why, in Lady Capulet's paragraph, the rhymed lines? (*g*) What do you find more, in Juliet's response, dutifulness or inclination? (*h*) With such a mother, and such a Nurse, what was to be expected?

### SCENE IV

1 (*a*) In the stage direction Mercutio has displaced Benvolio, standing next the hero. What do you infer from this? (*b*) Who of the newcomers here, according (ii. 67–74) to the list, may have been invited? (*c*) Does Romeo seem the same as before? (*d*) Which is nearer his mind and temperament, Benvolio or Mercutio? (*e*) What, up to l. 53, are your impressions of this company?

2 (*a*) What do you say of the following paragraph of Mercutio, as part of the running conversation? (*b*) What impressions, as respects Mercutio, does it make upon you? (*c*) Do you find Romeo subordinated by it to Mercutio? (*d*) Is Benvolio shown here, in your judgment, at the true level of his mind? (*e*) What conception of Romeo comes to you from his last paragraph? (*f*) What seems to be the purpose of this scene?

### SCENE V

1 (*a*) What is the effect of the stress on *Where's*, in the first line? (*b*) What is the entertainment to which Capulet's guests are bidden? (*c*) Why this opening talk and bustle between the

servants given? (*d*) What Guests and Maskers (l. 17) do Capulet and his daughter 'meet'? (*e*) What are your impressions of Capulet here as a host? (*f*) What seems un-English in the talk and manners of the man?

2 (*a*) Why is Lady Capulet not mentioned? (*b*) What does Romeo mean by (l. 47) 'hangs upon the cheek of night'? (*c*) What in Juliet that we have seen impresses him? (*d*) Do you understand Romeo now? (*e*) Do you suppose that Tybalt (l. 56) recognises only the voice of Romeo, and not his meaning? (*f*) Can you explain why Capulet (l. 67) is not incensed at Romeo?

3 (*a*) Is the report of Romeo (l. 70) in Verona likely to be correct? (*b*) How do you explain Capulet's readiness to echo such things of an enemy? (*c*) How is it to be explained (l. 78) that Tybalt insists? (*d*) What word in l. 81 has stress? (*e*) What point in having Tybalt thus assume the enmity of the family toward Romeo? (*f*) What point in having Tybalt withdraw from the house in anger? (*g*) Does Paris seem to have made use of his invitation? Why?

4 (*a*) What point in having the foregoing occur before we hear Romeo's words to Juliet? (*b*) How do you like his manner of addressing her? Is there any character in it, or only gallantry? (*c*) Does it seem that Juliet understands the voice, the words, the worship, as we understand them? (*d*) Why does Juliet say (l. 99) 'pilgrim' and (l. 102) 'palmer'? Is Romeo's mask perhaps of such a sort? What kind of a mask (iv. 32) is Mercutio wearing? (*e*) What is the 'shrine' (l. 96) that Romeo professes to profane? (*f*) Why should Juliet deprecate the proposed kiss upon her hand, a common courtesy of the time?

5 (*a*) How far do you think Juliet intends to invite (l. 107) what follows? (*b*) What do you say of Romeo's diffidence, or far-off worship, that he seemed to feel toward Rosaline? (*c*) Is it probable that Rosaline discerned Romeo? (*d*) Why does the Nurse address Romeo (l. 114) as 'bachelor'? (*e*) Why does she say, thus, to a stranger (ll. 118, 119), that Juliet shall inherit wealth?

6 (*a*) Why does Romeo feel and say (l. 120) that his life is his foe's debt? Why does he not propose to drop Juliet forth-

with from his thought? (*b*) What prompts the remark (l. 121) of Benvolio? (*c*) For whom was (l. 124) the 'trifling, foolish banquet' intended? (*d*) To what does Capulet (l. 125) respond by asking, 'Is it e'en so'? (*e*) Why does not Juliet ask directly (l. 134) who the stranger is? (*f*) Why should she recognise the possibility of his being a married man, since he has not behaved like one?

7 (*a*) Why does the Nurse (l. 139) say 'your' instead of 'our'? (*b*) What means (l. 140) 'only hate'? (*c*) How does this help the meaning of 'only love'? (*d*) What means (l. 142) 'prodigious birth'? (*e*) How can one who has never been known personally, or been even seen before, be a 'loathed enemy'? (*f*) Why is Juliet's fibbing answer (l. 144) made known to us? (*g*) What has been accomplished in this scene? (*h*) Why is the First Act brought to its conclusion here?

## ACT II

### SCENE I

1 (*a*) Does the Chorus prefixed to this act seem to hasten or retard the events anticipated? (*b*) Where are the 'five or six Maskers,' who accompanied Romeo and his friends hither? (*c*) How has Romeo managed to be apart from Mercutio and Benvolio? (*d*) Why has he not told them of his new passion, and dismissed them? (*e*) Does he seem like an unpractical, irresolute dreamer, as at the beginning of the play? (*f*) Develop fully the author's evident meaning here.

2 (*a*) Is it to be taken as characteristic of Benvolio that it (l. 5) comes over him where Romeo is? (*b*) What is the effect on us of Mercutio proposing and attempting (l. 6) to 'conjure' *too?* Why cannot he take his friend more seriously? (*c*) Why does not this closing of Romeo's intimacy with his friends belong to the First Act? (*d*) Is there any subordination, in this situation, of them to him or him to them? (*e*) How is Benvolio contrasted with Mercutio here?

### SCENE II

1 (*a*) What has been Romeo's impulse or aim in scaling the enclosure of the hated Capulets? (*b*) How different would be the behaviour of an Anglo-Saxon Romeo? (*c*) How does Juliet chance to appear at the very window he approaches? (*d*) What do you say of Romeo's soliloquy? What qualities of mind and spirit are palpably in evidence? (*e*) How does he become surer (l. 10) that it is Juliet who has appeared? (*f*) What is signified and measured to us in the long silence before she sighs?

2 (*a*) Does Romeo say his second paragraph aloud? (*b*) What is the burden of the words (ll. 33–36) that we now hear Juliet say? (*c*) Does or does not Romeo, hearing his name, understand fully what she has said? (*d*) What discovery (ll. 38, 39) is Juliet making? (*e*) What is the sense (l. 48) of 'for'? What word in the line has stress? (*f*) Does Romeo, in his answer (ll. 49–51), seem to understand her dismay?

3 (*a*) Does Juliet recognise (ll. 52, 53), apparently, who has addressed her? (*b*) What do you say of (ll. 53–57) Romeo's response? (*c*) In what mood, with what feeling, does she utter the first two lines of her response? (*d*) In what mood, with what feeling, does she say (l. 60) the last sentence in it? (*e*) What different shape does Juliet's dismay (ll. 62–65) now take? (*f*) Masculine minds are supposed to be matter-of-fact and practical, feminine minds imaginative. Does the dialogue now beginning illustrate? Explain.

4 (*a*) What marvel (l. 79) is in Juliet's mind? Is it natural? (*b*) While Juliet is asking these matter-of-fact questions, what is going on in her mind besides and chiefly? Do you think she appreciates Romeo's answer (ll. 80–84) to her last question? (*c*) Do you think she has grounds, as she understands them, in her consciousness, for what (ll. 85–106) she now says? Or does she do all recklessly, from the fascinating wish to keep this earliest lover? (*d*) Do you find her shallow, silly in her philosophy, or the reverse? Why? (*e*) What other qualities are to be discerned in the things she says?

5 (*a*) What feeling is shown and emphasised (l. 100) in 'gentleman'? (*b*) What makes Romeo similarly address Juliet (l. 107) by 'lady'? (*c*) What do you think would be the effect of such confidence upon an unworthy nature? (*d*) Why does not Juliet recognise the efforts that Romeo makes to assure her? Why has she no anxiety at all? (*e*) What feeling (ll. 116–124) now asserts itself? (*f*) Why is Romeo (l. 125) so far from sharing the same feeling?

6 (*a*) How fully is Juliet (l. 130) understood by Romeo? (*b*) What do you say of her answer to this last question? Is it maidenly, or overbold? (*c*) Do you think Juliet has begun to realise, as yet, that Romeo must not seek another interview of this kind? (*d*) Why does the author have the Nurse call Juliet away? (*e*) How do you think Juliet says (l. 137) '*sweet* Montague'? (*f*) What do you find in the circumstance of her taking leave of him with these words?

7 (*a*) How much do you think Romeo appreciates of all this? (*b*) What has come into Juliet's mind (ll. 142–148) since she said (l. 120) 'good night'? (*c*) Why is the Nurse made

(l. 149) to call Juliet again? (*d*) What do you find stronger (l. 150) in Juliet, her caution or her faith? (*e*) Why has not Romeo said anything as to a practical outcome of their attachment? Does he not realise the situation? (*f*) Is it, or is it not, credible that a girl of fourteen, who has never acted for herself, should be equal to such an exigency? (*g*) How would an Anglo-Saxon Juliet have done?

8 (*a*) Why should not Romeo expect (ll. 156–158) and be ready, after such felicity, to withdraw? (*b*) How differently would an Anglo-Saxon Romeo behave? (*c*) How does Juliet now (l. 159) call Romeo, and what is the need of doing it in such a way? (*d*) What is the quality, now (ll. 159–164), of Juliet's ideas and language? (*e*) Why does Juliet call her lover again (l. 168) by name, after he is returned and waiting? (*f*) Why has she called him back? And why (l. 171) has she forgotten?

9 (*a*) Where has this scene its climax? (*b*) What has been accomplished in it? (*c*) Which of the twain must withdraw and close the scene? (*d*) What instincts and motives bring this about? (*e*) Does Romeo keep, in the concluding conversation, to his imaginative heights? (*f*) Does Juliet keep to her practical, matter-of-fact level? (*g*) How do you explain?

### SCENE III

1 (*a*) Why does the author make Friar Laurence tell (l. 1) the time of the scene? (*b*) Why is the scene in rhyme? (*c*) Of what rank, in the society of the time, has the Friar come? (*d*) What impressions of the man, and of his mind, do you form from the opening paragraph? (*e*) Do you, or do you not, judge, from (ll. 31–42) the Friar's greeting, that he knows Romeo well and is fond of him? Show what is involved in this.

2 (*a*) Does Romeo's explanation (ll. 49–54), or the manner of it, argue especial qualities in the hero's mind, and if such, what? (*b*) What is the effect of the Friar's scolding (ll. 65–80) upon us? (*c*) Has Romeo deserved it? (*d*) What does the Friar mean (l. 90) by one respect? (*e*) If the houses are reconciled, will it, or will it not, profit the Friar or his chapter? (*f*) Was there, or was there not, rivalry between the Franciscan and the Benedictine orders in his day?

SCENE IV

1 (*a*) What is the time of this scene? (*b*) Where do you think Romeo will keep himself while he awaits Juliet's messenger? (*c*) What is Mercutio's implication (l. 10) respecting the challenge? (*d*) Why should Benvolio (l. 11) have a different conviction? (*e*) Which character is subordinated here, and how?

2 (*a*) How far does Romeo seem the same, with his two friends, as when they were last together? (*b*) What subordination, in the new situation, is brought about, and how? (*c*) Does Romeo recognise (l. 107) who are approaching? (*d*) Why has Peter accompanied the Nurse? (*e*) Why should the Nurse, before accosting the object of her search, ask for her fan? What is she, like some younger Italian women, probably wearing (*cf. Hamlet*, II. 445–447) to increase her height?

3 (*a*) Why has the author made Mercutio talk coarsely, and Romeo (ll. 121, 122) rebuke his friend? (*b*) Can you explain why the Nurse, in (l. 124) inquiring for Romeo, addresses, after what has just happened, all three? (*c*) What do Benvolio and Mercutio infer is the Nurse's message, and from whom? (*d*) What is the effect of Mercutio's conduct on our feelings toward him, and toward Romeo? (*e*) What do you say of the Nurse's plea (ll. 172–181) for her mistress? Is she truly anxious? (*f*) What more remarkable manifestation of her intelligence and character follows? (*g*) Why has the author introduced these lines?

4 (*a*) How is it that Romeo assumes (l. 192) that Juliet will come for shrift to Friar Laurence rather than elsewhere? (*b*) Why does the Nurse refuse (l. 194), and then accept (l. 197), Romeo's coin? What is the position of the Nurse in the Capulet household? (*c*) Does the Nurse seem to interest Romeo (ll. 213–219) by what she says of Paris? (*d*) Why is the Nurse's ignorance of the alphabet brought out? (*e*) Why does she make Peter (l. 232) go before?

SCENE V

1 (*a*) What can have caused this three hours' delay? (*b*) Why is Juliet waiting in the 'orchard'? (*c*) Why is this opening

paragraph given? (*d*) What is Juliet's natural inference from the unreadiness of the Nurse to answer anything? (*e*) Why is she unready and evasive? (*f*) What does the author bring out by this means?

2 (*a*) How do you account for the Nurse's absurd talk (ll. 38–45) about Romeo? (*b*) Why does she break off (ll. 58, 59) and ask, 'Where's your mother'? (*c*) Whose leave (l. 69) has Juliet been obliged to get, and why? (*d*) Why does the Nurse persist in withholding (l. 71) the details that Juliet so desires to know? (*e*) What do you say (l. 72) of the effect of the Nurse's words? (*f*) What of the spirit that she shows in this last paragraph? (*g*) Why did not Shakespeare have the lovers arrange, in the second scene, for their meeting at Friar Laurence's cell, and save the scenes between?

SCENE VI

1 (*a*) Why is it well to have Friar Laurence have and express misgivings over the proposed union? (*b*) Why has the author made Juliet enter to Romeo and the friar? (*c*) Show how he helps Juliet, in the sentences she is made to utter, in this hard situation. (*d*) What does the friar mean by his answer (l. 22) to her greeting?

2 (*a*) Why is Romeo, in his two paragraphs, made to express so much affection? (*b*) Would it not have been better had Juliet expressed less? (*c*) Where does the friar (l. 35) conduct the lovers? (*d*) Why does Shakespeare not show the marriage ceremony? (*e*) What need of presenting the lovers together in the friar's cell?

## ACT III

### SCENE I

1 (*a*) Show how Benvolio is in character here. (*b*) Do you think Mercutio has or has not reason for implying that it is Benvolio and not himself who is inclined to quarrels? Why is he made to talk so? (*c*) Do you think Benvolio or Mercutio more critical? (*d*) What is now the time of day? (*e*) Has Romeo yet seen Tybalt's challenge? Why?

2 (*a*) To whom does Tybalt say (l. 40), 'Follow me close,' and why? (*b*) Has Mercutio any especial reason for trying to provoke Tybalt? (*c*) Why is Benvolio concerned that (l. 56) 'all eyes gaze' on them? (*d*) What proof (l. 59) of Tybalt's anxiety to see Romeo? (*e*) What race differences made apparent here?

3 (*a*) What does Tybalt expect will be the effect (ll. 63, 64) of his words on Romeo? (*b*) Were it not for Romeo's new love for the Capulets, would or would not Tybalt have been disappointed? (*c*) If this were an Anglo-Saxon Romeo, would the answer to Tybalt be altered from (ll. 65–68) what we find? (*d*) What is the point of Tybalt's insolence (l. 69) in 'boy'? Which is the older of these two? (*e*) What feelings apparent (ll. 71–75) in Romeo's rejoinder? (*f*) What do you say of this paragraph? How far is it the utterance of the lover rather than of the gentleman?

4 (*a*) How do you think Mercutio interprets Romeo's answers and forbearance? (*b*) How is Tybalt minded to fight Mercutio now (l. 86), having declined before? (*c*) Why is Romeo still (l. 87) so unaroused and gentle? And why is not Benvolio's voice also heard in protest? (*d*) How is it that Romeo is now (ll. 89–93) so loud and potent? (*e*) Why does he say 'Hold Tybalt! good Mercutio'?

5 (*a*) Why does Tybalt disappear so suddenly? (*b*) Why does not this party think of flight? (*c*) Where do you think the

stress in Benvolio's question (l. 95) falls? Has Benvolio helped Romeo beat down their swords? (*d*) What do you say of this mortal hurt of Mercutio's? Is it due to an ordinary thrust? What was the spirit of the man who made it? (*e*) Why does not Mercutio tell Romeo (ll. 107, 108) sooner, and more petulantly, how the hit was made?

6 (*a*) What do you say (l. 109) of Romeo's answer? (*b*) Why is it Benvolio, and not Romeo, who is asked to help? (*c*) How far do you find your sympathy aroused for Mercutio? (*d*) Why is Romeo made (ll. 114–120) to remark in a soliloquy about his fate? (*e*) Why is the death of Mercutio so immediate?

7 (*a*) How far are Romeo's feelings changed (ll. 124, 125) by (ll. 121–123) Benvolio's words? (*b*) Can you see the reason why Tybalt ventures to come back? (*c*) What must be the air, the manner (l. 126) that he shows? (*d*) Can you explain the sudden change in Romeo's feeling? (*e*) How far would an Anglo-Saxon Romeo change like this?

8 (*a*) What does Romeo mean (l. 130) by 'take the villain back again'? Is this like Romeo? (*b*) What do you say of the rest of this paragraph to Tybalt? Are you disappointed in your hero? (*c*) What effect does Tybalt's answer (ll. 135, 136) make on you? (*d*) Do you find Romeo inclined to brag? (*e*) How long does the bout last? (*f*) What does this show as to the resources of the combatants? (*g*) Which is the older and heavier and more practised champion apparently?

9 (*a*) Why has not Benvolio done something, or proposed to do something, to avenge his friend? (*b*) Why have not the citizens appeared already? (*c*) Why does Romeo hesitate, and need repeated exhortation, to flee? (*d*) What does Romeo mean (l. 141) in 'I am fortune's fool'? (*e*) What are your feelings toward him now?

10 (*a*) Why does Benvolio remain? (*b*) Why does the First Citizen (ll. 144, 145) arrest Benvolio for answering his question? (*c*) Can you see any reason why the author should wish to set us more completely (ll. 153, 154) against Lady Capulet? (*d*) Do we learn anything further, from (ll. 158, 179) Benvolio's account, about the duel between Tybalt and Romeo? (*e*) Does Benvolio,

in his report, favour his friend? Why could he (ll. 177, 178) not 'draw to part them'?

11 (*a*) Why does not Romeo's mother make some counter-plea against (ll. 185, 186) Lady Capulet's request for vengeance? (*b*) Why should the Prince (ll. 191, 192) change his mind when Montague speaks? (*c*) What do you think of the justice of Romeo's sentence? (*d*) How are your impressions now relatively of Mercutio's and Romeo's powers? (*e*) Have you had the same estimate from the first? (*f*) For what was Mercutio chiefly needed? (*g*) Why was he made so brilliant? (*h*) What use in special and at large has the author made of Benvolio? (*i*) Does he appear again?

SCENE II

1 (*a*) What is the time of this scene? (*b*) How long is it since we saw Juliet here before? (*c*) Do you or do you not conclude that her having been shown here in the orchard before has anything to do with her being presented, waiting for Romeo, now? (*d*) How far and in what way do you find your impressions of Juliet altered from such as were formed in the second scene of the last act? (*e*) What has taught Juliet so much since her mother talked to her of Paris?

2 (*a*) What of the language, the imagery, of this opening paragraph? (*b*) In this intensest activity of her imagination, how far do you find the objective, Imogen-like qualities observed in former scenes? (*c*) Do you or do you not find anything in phrase or manner suggestive of a masculine personality? (*d*) How differently would an Anglo-Saxon Juliet have soliloquised? (*e*) Do you or do you not here find anything unmaidenly and gross?

3 (*a*) What signifies the sombre hues and tints that Juliet's imagination uses, and the absence, for an Italian mind like hers, of intense, warm colours? (*b*) Of what character are the strong ideas and terms in (ll. 10–21) the middle part of the paragraph? (*c*) How well does it appear that Juliet understands herself at this interesting moment? (*d*) Why do you suppose Shakespeare has made us overhear this paragraph, or rather has made her utter it on purpose for us to overhear? (*e*) What do you say of the means used to stop the soliloquy? (*f*) What dramatic need of

having the Nurse bring the rope-ladder and throw it down in our sight?

4 (*a*) Why does the author repeat, in the lines following, the part of the Nurse in the fifth scene of the last act? (*b*) If his wish be, as seems, to make Juliet believe that her husband is dead, what must be his artistic motive? Is it for effect upon Juliet or ourselves? (*c*) Is the Nurse, in your opinion, more than willing, does she intend, to give Juliet pain? (*d*) Do you take it that Tybalt, as (l. 61) she says, has been good to the Nurse? (*e*) Can you see reasons why (l. 66) Juliet should have been fond of such a cousin?

5 (*a*) How must Juliet have conceived of Tybalt (l. 71) as slain by Romeo? (*b*) How can you account for (ll. 73–85) what she says explaining it? (*c*) Why does the Nurse so quickly (ll. 85–90) turn to denunciation? (*d*) What effect of this, and especially of her last words, on Juliet? Can you explain? (*e*) How fully does she now realise (ll. 101–107) how the killing happened?

6 (*a*) How is it that Juliet did not realise (l. 108) the Nurse's word concerning Romeo? (*b*) Why does she think, from 'banished,' that Romeo is already gone? (*c*) Why does she now (l. 127) ask for her father and her mother? (*d*) Why does she assume (ll. 130–137), concerning her fate, the worst? (*e*) What, after all the pain she has caused Juliet, starts up the Nurse? (*f*) Can you account for Juliet's thinking (l. 142) to send the ring?

### SCENE III

1 (*a*) Where is Romeo when the Friar (l. 1) summons him to come forth? (*b*) What does this scene connect with? How much time has elapsed? (*c*) How is it that the Friar now tells (l. 11) what the sentence is, Romeo not knowing? (*d*) Why is it that Romeo prefers death to banishment? Is he in his right mind? How would an Anglo-Saxon Romeo feel? (*e*) Which of the two is subordinated here, and how?

2 (*a*) What, at the knocking (l. 71), gives the Friar concern? (*b*) What do the quick repeated knockings show as to the newcomer's state of mind? (*c*) Why does Romeo assume (ll. 94–

98) that Juliet's love has ceased because of Tybalt's death? (*d*) How should the Friar know more (ll. 117 and 135) of lovers' philosophy than Romeo? (*e*) Whom does the author make responsible for Romeo's visit to his wife? Why does Shakespeare do this?

3 (*a*) Why has the author made, on both sides, such ado before allowing Romeo to go to Juliet's chamber? Is it for their sake or for ours? (*b*) What is the Friar's motive? Why does he wish to make the marriage irrevocable? (*c*) Why did not the Nurse, at the outset, give Romeo the ring? (*d*) Why does the author have the Nurse withdraw in advance of Romeo and not with him? (*e*) Do you think the Friar's plan (ll. 150–154) practicable and wise? (*f*) Who are meant (l. 150) by 'we'? (*g*) Will Romeo's absence, apparently, when the marriage is proclaimed, assist or hinder the reconciliation of the houses?

SCENE IV

1 (*a*) Why should Paris have come to the home of the Capulets, at such a time, on business of his own? (*b*) Is it significant that, at this visit, Lady Capulet also is present? (*c*) Do you take it that Paris has been pressing his suit for Juliet, to her father, since (I. ii) we saw him last? (*d*) How long do you infer (l. 7) he has at this time stayed? (*e*) What makes Capulet (ll. 12, 13) think it best now to accede?

2 (*a*) Does it seem that Lady Capulet has spoken to Juliet, since (I. iii) their first talk, of Paris's suit? (*b*) Why does the author make Capulet (l. 15) in such haste to have Juliet approached? (*c*) How does Shakespeare make (ll. 19–28) this scandalous speed plausible? (*d*) How well do you like Paris's opinion (l. 29) of the plan? (*e*) What further characterisation of Capulet is to be found in this scene? (*f*) Why do we not hear more, in this conference with Paris, from Lady Capulet? (*g*) What additional light is thrown upon the character of Juliet's mother in this scene?

SCENE V

1 (*a*) Did Lady Capulet go, as bidden, to Juliet's chamber before she went to bed? Why? (*b*) How far is Juliet's first

paragraph marked with her former and usual matter-of-fact quality, and how far Romeo's first, with the opposite? (*c*) What Italianism does Shakespeare venture in l. 12? Where, in scenes preceding, has he once at least borrowed the same idiom? (*d*) Are you not surprised that Juliet should soberly speak (ll. 13–16) of the daybreak in the way she does? How do you explain? (*e*) What do you say of Romeo's answering paragraph? Is what is said genuinely meant? (*f*) How far might an Anglo-Saxon Romeo be expected to feel and say the like?

2 (*a*) What words in l. 25 have stress? (*b*) What has caused (l. 26) the change in Juliet? Does the remainder of the paragraph sound like her new or her former self? (*c*) Why should the Nurse (l. 37) say 'Madam'? (*d*) What does Juliet (l. 41), after she hears the Nurse's warning, do? (*e*) Is it according to nature, or is it not, that Juliet does not respond (l. 42) to Romeo's farewell? Where is she when he is next addressed? (*f*) Is the parting, on Romeo's side, in accord with his masculine nature?

3 (*a*) Why is not Romeo inclined now, as at other times (*cf.* I. iv. 106–111), to look with Juliet (l. 54) on the dark side of their future? In what points are her nature and his alike? (*b*) How far does Romeo seem really (ll. 58, 59) to catch Juliet's mood? (*c*) What hint as to companionship with her mother is Juliet (l. 67) made to give us? Can you account for such relations between a mother and her only child? (*d*) When did Juliet's tears begin? (*e*) Why does she resort (l. 69) to fibbing?

4 (*a*) Why should Lady Capulet assume (l. 70), with no evidence and without preliminaries, such a cause for her daughter's weeping? (*b*) Why does Juliet make such extended use of the subterfuge offered by her mother? (*c*) Do you think the mother proposes to poison Romeo for her own vengeance, or to humour Juliet? (*d*) What does Juliet mean (l. 98) in 'I would temper it'? Would she need to see this man, to accomplish this? (*e*) What race differences patent in this dialogue? (*f*) How did Shakespeare know so well how an Italian daughter and her mother, of the top of respectability, would talk at such a time?

5 (*a*) What do you say (ll. 106, 107) of Juliet's words to her mother? What mood is in them? Are there tears yet in her voice? (*b*) What feeling (l. 112) follows? (*c*) What change (ll. 117, 118) comes now? Are there tears in the tones here? (*d*) How far did the author intend to make the energy (l. 122: 'I swear') of her language significant? (*e*) What (ll. 125, 126) is her mother's feeling?

6 (*a*) Why should Capulet (ll. 127–138) talk at such length of Juliet's weeping? (*b*) Can you explain Lady Capulet's manner (l. 141) of seconding her husband? (*c*) How far has Capulet (l. 145) 'wrought' Paris to be Juliet's suitor? (*d*) What does Juliet really mean (l. 149) by 'thankful for hate'? (*e*) How far does Capulet seem to understand what she has said? (*f*) What do you say of his language to her?

7 (*a*) Is it or is it not now clearer why Shakespeare has not made Capulet of the same mould as the Montagues? (*b*) What does Juliet (ll. 159, 160), now kneeling, propose to say to her father? (*c*) How does the author prevent her doing this? (*d*) Why is the Nurse made (ll. 169, 170) to protest against Capulet's abuse? (*e*) Why does not Juliet confess to her mother (ll. 200–203) that she is a wife already? (*f*) Do you think Lady Capulet afraid to stand up for her child?

8 (*a*) Why does not the Nurse now disclose Juliet's relation with Romeo? (*b*) What is the ground of Juliet's dismay, her obligation to Romeo, or her obligation to duty? (*c*) Whom does it seem that Juliet has depended on chiefly hitherto, her parents or the Nurse? (*d*) Why has Shakespeare given the play a nurse that will propose to Juliet such infamy? (*e*) Why is she betrayed into speaking disparagingly of Romeo? (*f*) What race characteristics distinguish her from such a figure in an Anglo-Saxon household?

9 (*a*) How is it that Juliet has never (l. 228) till now discerned the moral nature of her companion? (*b*) How would an Anglo-Saxon Juliet, at (l. 230) the point where her Italian sister dissembles, have behaved? (*c*) And what of the immediate and unhesitating prevarication (ll. 231–233) to her mother? How would that strike us in a heroine of our own race? (*d*) Is this a difference in nature or in training? (*e*) What do you say of

Juliet's idea of (ll. 236–239) the 'sins' of the Nurse? What does this hint as to Juliet's ethic and religious training? (*f*) What is the effect on Juliet of this defection of the Nurse? (*g*) Do you think Juliet really has the power (l. 242), in case of an adverse issue, that she supposes? (*h*) How would an English or American girl of equivalent maturity and strength prepare for failure?

## ACT IV

### SCENE I

1 (*a*) At what time of the day does this scene open? (*b*) How far have the events of the last scene reached, at its beginning? (*c*) What has Paris come to Friar Laurence for? (*d*) Has he waited to learn, from her parents, Juliet's mind? (*e*) Do you imagine that what he says (ll. 9–12) of Capulet's purpose is a fair and truthful statement? How does he know? (*f*) Why is Paris unwilling to take any share of responsibility for the hurried marriage?

2 (*a*) How is it that Paris, too bashful to woo, is now (ll. 18, 20, 22, 24) so bold? (*b*) Whom does Juliet mean (l. 25) by 'him'? (*c*) What do you say in general of Juliet's answers? How far do you find her petulant, indignant, spiteful? (*d*) Do you think her really more tolerant, or less tolerant, in her feelings toward Paris here than a Northern Juliet would be? Can you identify the forces the principles involved? (*e*) What does Paris mean (l. 29) by 'abused with tears'?

3 (*a*) What effect is produced on you by Paris' talk? (*b*) What do you say of Juliet's manner of getting free of Paris? Is she precipitate? Does he guess her feeling? (*c*) How does the author make us sure what that feeling is? Why does he do this? (*d*) Can you explain how Juliet (ll. 50, 51) should be peevish and unreasonable? (*e*) How is it that (l. 54) she has a knife? (*f*) Does the Friar believe that Juliet will do as she proposes?

4 (*a*) What (ll. 71–74) is the artistic purpose that Shakespeare is occupied with now? (*b*) Do you think Juliet naturally a fearless woman? Do you believe that she realises (ll. 77–85) what she is saying? (*c*) What do you say (ll. 87, 88) of her motive as she interprets it? Do you think it natural or not natural that she should understand so clearly the forces that

control her being? (*d*) Do you think that the author has or has not brought her to womanhood too speedily? (*e*) Why does the Friar cry 'Hold,' and repeatedly, to Juliet?

5 (*a*) Why does not Juliet confess, or get absolved, before such a momentous undertaking? Why does not the Friar require it? (*b*) Were there ever concoctions capable of producing such results as (ll. 95–106) the Friar describes? How far was the belief of Shakespeare's audiences in such things different from ours? (*c*) Why is the Friar made to outline to us, in advance, the operation of the potion? (*d*) Why does he speak of Juliet being 'uncovered' on the bier, and clad in the best of her daily wearing?

6 (*a*) Is there anything in the Friar's plan, besides relief, that furnishes a motive to Juliet? (*b*) Why does the Friar utter (ll. 119, 120) any hint of a proviso? (*c*) What do you find (l. 121) in Juliet's mood? (*d*) Why does the Friar refer again (ll. 123, 124) to Romeo? (*e*) Why does not this high-bred girl at least thank the Friar before withdrawing? (*f*) Do you think that Juliet (l. 125) realises much of what is before her?

### SCENE II

1 (*a*) How many guests at first (III. iv. 23) did Capulet propose to have at Juliet's wedding? What does the present preparation (l. 2) seem to argue? (*b*) How do you explain the change? (*c*) Has the Nurse (ll. 11, 12) told Lady Capulet what Juliet bade? (*d*) How far do you blame Juliet (ll. 15 and 18–22) for looking merry and practising deceit? Who is responsible for her actions here? (*e*) What punishment for affecting enthusiasm (l. 24) now comes? (*f*) Does Juliet (ll. 25–27) seem to mind? Would other Juliets probably feel in the same way at such a turn?

2 (*a*) Why does Juliet (l. 28) still kneel? (*b*) Who does Capulet (l. 30) intend should go to tell Paris of the shortened interval? (*c*) Why does Juliet take the Nurse away? (*d*) Why does Lady Capulet (l. 36) hold out for Thursday? (*e*) What is the time-scheme, thus far, of the play?

3 (*a*) Why is Capulet insistent (l. 37) that the wedding shall be changed to Wednesday? (*b*) Why has Shakespeare

wished, through him, to change the time? (*c*) How will Capulet's stirring about (l. 39) assist? (*d*) Whom (l. 43) does Capulet try to summon? Is he now alone? (*e*) Do you find or not find that you dislike this man? (*f*) Do you like him or not like him better than Romeo's father?

SCENE III

1 (*a*) How far is Juliet (l. 1) giving herself concern over what she shall meet Romeo in, and how she shall look? (*b*) What of her character is discerned in this? (*c*) Would Northern Juliets typically seem different or not different here? (*d*) Why did the Friar require (l. 2) that Juliet 'lie alone'? (*e*) Why is Lady Capulet so late (ii. 41) in complying with her husband's wish? (*f*) What do you say of Juliet's way (ll. 7–10) of dealing with her mother, who has come to help? (*g*) Where does Juliet get her strength of character?

2 (*a*) What is Juliet's feeling (l. 14) as she bids her mother and the Nurse farewell? (*b*) Are you disappointed that (l. 18) she calls for help? Why does she yield to the impulse? (*c*) How is it that, to bring 'them' back, she calls for the Nurse alone? (*d*) What effect is produced, by (ll. 18, 19) her rallying herself, upon our sympathies? (*e*) What do you say (ll. 21–23) of the logic and order of her procedure?

3 (*a*) What is the practical result (ll. 24–29) of her second inquiry? (*b*) What kind of a temperament and mind do we (ll. 30–35) now find are Juliet's? (*c*) What effect of such visualising and realising, as follow upon the plausibility of her act? (*d*) What is the result of this realising, in Juliet's intense and vivid vision, of her coming experiences in detail? (*e*) Of what imaginative quality (ll. 36–54) do you find these lines?

4 (*a*) How does Juliet chance to realise now (ll. 55, 56), apparently for the first time, her cousin Tybalt's hate? (*b*) Why does she cry out that Tybalt should stay? (*c*) Why does she call to Romeo, and propose to come to him at such a moment of peril? Does she think perhaps to go to them, in spirit, by way of the vial, or what is her thought? (*d*) What do you say of the force, the energy, of the paragraphs in this scene? (*e*) Have your impressions of Juliet been altered in any way?

SCENE IV

1 (*a*) What is the point of showing, now, while Juliet lies as in death upstairs, the bustle and commotion below in Capulet's mansion? (*b*) Of what use is Capulet making himself in the preparations? (*c*) Why should it be the Nurse who (ll. 6–8) takes Capulet to task for staying up? (*d*) What seems to be the spirit (ll. 14, 17, and 18) of the servants in these extra demands? (*e*) Why is not Peter more acceptable?

2 (*a*) How does Capulet enable himself to make the discovery (l. 20) that it is day? (*b*) How far is it significant that he (l. 23) selects the Nurse to apprise Juliet? (*c*) Why should he propose (l. 25) 'to chat' with Paris at such a time? (*d*) How many times has Capulet charged somebody to stir or hasten in this scene? How much acquaintance with the things going on does all this argue? (*e*) Why has Capulet been made of late such an important figure? And since when?

SCENE V

1 (*a*) Why has Shakespeare not permitted Juliet's mother to be the first to enter here? (*b*) By what rule of efficacy does the Nurse seem to select (ll. 2, 3) awakening words? (*c*) Why (l. 10) does not the author introduce Paris (*cf.* i. 107, 108) here, and suit the taste of his times? (*d*) How is it that Juliet is not found, as the Friar seems to have intended, lying in her bed? (*e*) What accompanies (l. 13) the Nurse's saying 'Lady, lady, lady'? (*f*) Does the Nurse get (l. 16) the aqua vitæ called for? Why does she call for it?

2 (*a*) What is the effect of the sight (ll. 19–21) upon Lady Capulet? (*b*) What new impressions have you of her nature? Does she seem Italian now? (*c*) Has Capulet heard (l. 22) apparently the call for help? (*d*) Why does the Nurse (l. 23) add 'deceased' to her excited outcry? (*e*) What does Lady Capulet do in connection with (l. 24) her next exclamation?

3 (*a*) What do you say of Capulet's utterance (ll. 25–29) as he lays his hands upon his child? Why is there, from this man of all men, poetic language? (*b*) Does it seem that the lips (l. 27) are closed or parted? (*c*) What does Capulet mean (l. 32) by 'ties up my tongue'? (*d*) Does it seem that Capulet

or Lady Capulet connects this death with the forced marriage? (*e*) Why should Friar Laurence and the musicians enter Juliet's apartments? Should the setting perhaps be changed?

4 (*a*) How far does Capulet's grief (ll. 34–40) seem tender and genuine? (*b*) Why is the Nurse's lamenting (ll. 49–54) so demonstrative? (*c*) Can you interpret what Paris in his grief (ll. 55–58) is saying? (*d*) Why is the author keeping this situation open with so much talk? (*e*) Of what use is (ll. 65–83) the preachment of the Friar?

5 (*a*) What do you say of the practicalness (ll. 84–90) of Capulet's response? (*b*) From which of her parents has Juliet seemingly derived her matter-of-fact tendencies of mind? (*c*) How does Shakespeare manage to close the dialogue? (*d*) What need to hurry the supposed burial of Juliet? (*e*) How is it that the musicians have not been dismissed? (*f*) How is it that the Nurse has not withdrawn before? What purpose does the author serve by retaining her as he does?

6 (*a*) What is there in the Nurse's figure that (ll. 100, 101) excites comment? (*b*) Has Peter, do you think, been sent here by anybody? (*c*) Why is it that his sorrow is so strong? (*d*) Why does the author keep the musicians now, for this hardly edifying dialogue? (*e*) Is it or is it not well to close the scene with a dallying anticlimax?

## ACT V

### SCENE I

1 (*a*) At what time in the day, apparently, does the scene open? Is it soon after Romeo's rising? (*b*) Why is Romeo so inclined to trust to the flattering truth of dreams? Where hitherto has he been shown superior to their spell? (*c*) Why does the author, in this first paragraph, give us again the typic Romeo of the earlier scenes? (*d*) What does this manner of referring (l. 6) to Juliet betray? (*e*) What new impressions come as to the difference between this man's manner of thinking and living and Juliet's? (*f*) Is this difference due to race, or sex, or personality?

2 (*a*) Why does not Balthasar (l. 11) speak? (*b*) Are there letters (l. 13) in sight? (*c*) Is it significant that Romeo makes no inquiry about his mother? (*d*) What do you say of Balthasar's report (ll. 17–21) of Juliet's death? Is he a man of refinement and culture? (*e*) What has happened (l. 22) that makes him ask pardon?

3 (*a*) Why does Romeo ask no questions about the cause? (*b*) What does (l. 24) his defiance show? (*c*) Is Romeo trusting the truth of dreams now? What has stopped the boyhood in him? (*d*) When did Juliet stop her dreaming and become woman?

4 (*a*) Is there anything Italian in Romeo's manner and conduct here? (*b*) What does Balthasar (ll. 27–29) fear? (*c*) Why does Romeo (l. 34) say 'Juliet,' and not 'my lady,' now? Is his mind in excitement or repose? (*d*) Do you think it natural or not natural that the sight of the shop (ll. 42–48) should come back to him vividly in such detail? Might this happen to an Italian if not to an Anglo-Saxon mind? (*e*) What need of having Romeo add the remaining lines in this paragraph?

5 (*a*) What do you say of Romeo's way (ll. 58–60) of bidding for the poison? Do you think he has other money here? (*b*) Why does Romeo crave drugs of such instantaneous action? Is it to end life with the utmost quickness, or to escape the pains of death, or for some other reason? (*c*) Do you think the apothecary yields to Romeo's pleading or his offer? Does he or does he not understand that he could have a larger sum on demanding it? (*d*) Have you seen Romeo in a compelling mood before? (*e*) How far is it from Mantua to Verona? (*f*) Do you think Balthasar will tell Romeo the particulars of Juliet's death as they ride together? Why?

SCENE II

1 (*a*) What do you say of the dramatic opening, under present circumstances, of this scene? (*b*) Would it or would it not have been better were this scene introduced before the last? (*c*) How far has the element of destiny been introduced before? (*d*) What impressions, apart from knowledge, come to you with reference to the issue?

2 (*a*) What difference between the Friars is evident? (*b*) Why did not Friar Laurence tell his brother the dear import of the letter? (*c*) How long is it since Juliet took the potion? (*d*) What time of day did she drink it? What time of day has now been reached? (*e*) Does the Friar's amended plan seem practicable?

SCENE III

1 (*a*) At what hour, apparently, does this scene open? (*b*) Why (l. 2) would Paris not be seen? What advantage does Shakespeare borrow thus? (*c*) Why should Paris have had his page come to carry the flowers? (*d*) What impressions and feelings concerning Paris now shape themselves? (*e*) What use is made of having the page at hand?

2 (*a*) Has the arousement of Romeo's mind subsided? (*b*) What effect (l. 40) is produced upon Balthasar by Romeo's words? (*c*) Is Balthasar a man easily affrighted? Where have we evidence in the earlier part of the play? (*d*) Do you think Romeo capable of carrying out his threats (ll. 33–36) with such a man? (*e*) Are there race characteristics or differences here? Explain.

3 (*a*) What does Romeo apparently (l. 41) give to his man? (*b*) Why does Shakespeare make this action seem (ll. 43, 44) to betray Romeo's purpose? (*c*) What do you say of Romeo's words (ll. 45–48), as he wrenches open the iron bolts of the tomb? How do they measure the energy of his action? (*d*) What are your feelings toward Paris, as he attempts to arrest Romeo? (*e*) How should you have imagined Romeo would deal with him? How do you explain his tender consideration and pleading?

4 (*a*) For what chief use, as we now see, was the page brought in? (*b*) Is the fight shorter or longer, apparently, than the one in which Tybalt met his death? Why? Has Romeo the same feeling toward his victim as at that time? (*c*) How do you explain Romeo's sublime willingness (l. 74) to allow the dead man's wish, and lay the body in his Juliet's grave? (*d*) What word in l. 77 has chief stress? Would an Anglo-Saxon Romeo have failed to catch and hold the meaning? (*e*) How far does Romeo's feeling change when he knows Paris was his rival? (*f*) What do you say of the feeling that manifests itself (ll. 80, 81) in his next action? (*g*) Does the sight of Juliet, in all her reviving, awakening beauty, make him lay seemingly the body of Paris farther off?

5 (*a*) What influences are perhaps arousing the feeling (l. 89) Romeo wonders at? (*b*) Why is not Juliet (l. 96) pale? (*c*) What do you say of (ll. 101–109) his last words to Juliet? Can you discern the secret of their power? (*d*) How is it that he does not perceive that (ll. 113, 114) the lips have life? (*e*) Has he obeyed the directions (i. 77) of the apothecary? Why?

6 (*a*) What has Friar Laurence (l. 122) stumbled over? (*b*) What does the Friar's word (l. 124) show as to his feeling in finding Balthasar? Why should he have such feeling? (*c*) Why does Shakespeare keep (l. 131) Balthasar from looking upon the scene within the tomb? What do you say of his manner of bringing this about? (*d*) Can you explain (ll. 137–139) Balthasar's dream? Why should he have failed to stay awake? (*e*) What signifies the fact that (l. 142) both swords are gory?

7 (*a*) What was a chief dread of Juliet about awaking? (*b*) What word (l. 148) seems to show that this feeling has

lasted through her trance? (*c*) Why does she not (l. 150) see Romeo, and why asks for him so immediately? (*d*) What effect is produced on Friar Laurence (l. 151) by the noise? Is this plausible? (*e*) Why does he not stand by the work he has begun? (*f*) Does he expect to move Juliet by (ll. 154–158) the considerations he uses?

8 (*a*) Why is not Juliet (l. 160) afraid to be left alone in the tomb? (*b*) How is it that she does not cry out for causes, reasons? (*c*) Why is there no grief? (*d*) Why is she so happily anxious to seek death? (*e*) Show how far she is yet (l. 168), in this extreme moment, like her old objective self. (*f*) Why should Juliet be concerned at the noise? (*g*) Why is the dagger (l. 169) 'happy'? (*h*) Why has she so great joy, so little horror, in her act? (*i*) What is un-Saxon in the manner of this awaking, and this death?

9 (*a*) Should you have expected the page to bring watchmen earlier? (*b*) Why does the First Watchman bid (l. 178) 'raise up the Montagues'? (*c*) What (l. 188) is the time now reached? Why has the author so accelerated it? (*d*) Why does he bring together again the company which he presented early in the first scene? (*e*) Does Capulet understand (l. 203) that his daughter is only just dead?

10 (*a*) What sort of a mother (l. 210) do we see that Romeo had? How far does he seem to have derived her nature? (*b*) What necessity that we should hear the Friar (ll. 231–269) rehearse the story? (*c*) What real need (l. 271) of corroborating the Friar's testimony? (*d*) Is the letter (l. 275) a logical factor, and is it of use? (*e*) Does Montague's proposal and promise (l. 299) seem characteristic? (*f*) How far is the author's statement (ll. 9–11 of Prologue) a true summary of the play? (*g*) What ultimate meanings, or lessons, has it brought?

# III

## TWELFTH NIGHT

### ACT I

#### SCENE I

1 (*a*) What is the mood of Orsino? (*b*) What does his fondness for music and the fragrance of violets argue as to his temperament and nature? (*c*) What do his reflections (ll. 9–15) signify as to his power of analysis and intellectual culture? (*d*) Do you infer, from (l. 16) Curio's question, that the Duke is or is not accustomed to ride to hounds? (*e*) What do you conclude, from this inference, as to the essential manliness or effeminacy of the hero?

2 (*a*) What do we find has drawn the Duke away from manly exercises? (*b*) What does he mean in (l. 20) 'purged the air of pestilence'? (*c*) What should this signify as to Orsino's ideals, and the purity of his mind? (*d*) How does the Duke here resemble Romeo in his love for Rosaline? (*e*) How far should a comedy differ in tone and substance from a tragedy?

3 (*a*) What does the exclusion of Valentine (l. 24) from the palace of a neighbour argue as to the feelings of the hostess? (*b*) What do you say of her proposing to shut herself up for seven years indoors? Does this seem prompted by natural grief, or by some other motive? (*c*) What of the aversion that can propose to itself, for relief, such deprivation and discomfort? (*d*) Does the Duke seem wanting in acumen and judgment, more than, or much more than, Romeo? Why does he not see through the subterfuge of the lady? (*e*) How different does this Orsino seem from a typical Italian hero? (*f*) How does Orsino propose (ll. 40, 41) to beguile the time?

SCENE II

1 (*a*) Why should Viola, in this situation, be the first to speak? (*b*) Why does not this high-born young woman speak with more grief (l. 5) about her brother? Does it seem that his death or rescue is the first and most fundamental thing in her thoughts? (*c*) What do you say (ll. 8–17) of the Captain's explainings? Is the polished language due to unusual education, or to the influence of the person who is addressed? (*d*) Why does not Viola speak, if not more about her brother, at least about the destination for which they shipped, how she may continue her journey? (*e*) Does it or does it not appear likely that she has heard others (l. 28) than her father speak of this Duke? Why does she add the last clause of the sentence?

2 (*a*) How far do the inquiries of Viola remind you of Juliet's questioning of her Nurse on first meeting Romeo? (*b*) What is the difference between (l. 35) 'What's she' and Who's she? What would be a proper answer to the latter? (*c*) Why should Viola wish (l. 41) to 'serve' that lady? (*d*) What are we to understand from 'made mine own occasion mellow'? (*e*) Should you say that her brother, on setting out, was a party to the scheme, or plan, according to which his sister's 'estate' was to be kept concealed?

3 (*a*) What, said by the Captain, seems to change Viola's rather distant wish to a resolution? (*b*) Why should she, who can (l. 52) pay bounteously, desire to be a servant to anybody? (*c*) Why has she concluded to change from the Countess to (l. 55) the Duke? (*d*) What do you conceive are the proportions of Viola's figure? Why does she not (l. 56) offer herself for the Duke's service as a page? (*e*) What do you say of the self-sufficiency and strength of this young woman, and the motives arousing them? (*f*) In how far does she remind you of Juliet? (*g*) From what country, apparently, have Viola and her brother sailed? (*h*) In what seems Illyria different from Italy?

SCENE III

1 (*a*) What is Sir Toby's status in this household? (*b*) How did such a man reach knighthood? (*c*) What is he in appearance and figure? (*d*) What are your impressions of Maria?

On the strength of what does she presume (ll. 8, 9) to take her mistress's uncle to task? (*e*) Are we or are we not to recognise more than a household interest in (ll. 14, 15) her next reference to his weakness? (*f*) From where, apparently, did Sir Toby bring in (l. 16) the foolish knight? (*g*) Which seems to have the better of the other in this dialogue?

2 (*a*) How does Sir Andrew contrast, in appearance and figure and manners, with Sir Toby? What do you say of his manner of greeting? (*b*) How should such a fellow have become a knight? (*c*) What in Sir Andrew's behaviour seems to prompt (l. 52) Sir Toby's 'accost'? (*d*) Why should Sir Andrew fail so egregiously in catching Sir Toby's meaning? (*e*) Do these knights seem to be Illyrians, or of what other race? (*f*) Do you think Sir Toby refers to Maria correctly (l. 54) as his niece's chambermaid? (*g*) Does she appear to belong to the same nationality as Viola, or as the knights?

3 (*a*) What effect does Sir Toby's assent (l. 92) to Sir Andrew's theory of his slow wit seem to have upon his visitor? (*b*) Can you account for Olivia's restrictions (ll. 115–117) upon herself, about a husband, supposing that Sir Toby tells the truth? (*c*) Why should Sir Andrew mention (ll. 120, 121) his fondness for masques and revels here? Has he been entertained with these? (*d*) Does Sir Andrew's quickness or grace of movement seem to be of the kind called for in the 'galliard'? Does he know apparently what sort of dance is meant? (*e*) Has Sir Andrew ever been out of England? Has Sir Toby?

4 (*a*) Why does Sir Toby set about flattering his friend? (*b*) What sort of a show (ll. 149–151) does Sir Andrew furnish? (*c*) Why does Sir Toby wish to keep Sir Andrew from going home? (*d*) Why is not Olivia, in this scene laid in her own house, presented to us? (*e*) Why is this rather inconsequential comedy shown first and instead?

### SCENE IV

1 (*a*) Would a Valentine be likely to take to a new servant, like Cæsario, with no trace of jealousy, after three days of overshadowing? How can this newcomer have thus approved herself to everybody, by conduct or by nature? (*b*) Why should Viola

ask (l. 7) whether her master is inconstant in disposition? (*c*) What does (l. 10) the Duke's call, and the manner of it, show? (*d*) Does it appear (ll. 11, 12) that Valentine knows the extent to which Viola has gained her master's confidence? (*e*) Do you think that the Duke is diffident, unaccustomed to the society of refined women? Why does he think of sending Cæsario rather than any other of his more tried servants?

2 (*a*) Do you think that Viola's manner of humouring her master, and of inventing select and gentle offices, is fairly illustrated in the paragraphs following? (*b*) What does the Duke seem (l. 21) to mean by 'leap all civil bounds'? (*c*) Do you think that Viola has expected (l. 23) or coveted this mission? (*d*) Why should she hesitate to see her rival? (*e*) Do you think she will (ll. 41, 42) do her best for the Duke, or for herself? (*f*) How would this scene have struck you if Scene iii had been omitted, or placed after?

### SCENE V

1 (*a*) Why should Maria care where the Clown has been? (*b*) What sort of a mistress has she, to remit punishment at her excuse? (*c*) How much does the Clown care for her help? (*d*) What is the Clown's point in referring (ll. 29, 30) to her wit and Toby's drinking? (*e*) Why should the author introduce Olivia after the dialogue of two such servants as Maria and the Clown? (*f*) And what sort of a personage in appearance and air is Malvolio?

2 (*a*) What evidently (l. 41) does the Fool essay with his mistress? (*b*) In what spirit does she answer? (*c*) How does the Clown manage to baffle her resolve not to hear him? (*d*) How does Malvolio stand, and look, the while? (*e*) What characterisation of their mistress is effected incidentally withal?

3 (*a*) With what feeling (ll. 79, 80) does Olivia end her displeasure for the Fool's truanting? (*b*) How do you think the Fool likes Malvolio (ll. 81–83) for his good word? (*c*) What do you think (ll. 89–96) is the measure of Malvolio's mind? (*d*) What might be the effect on Malvolio of his mistress's dignifying him thus with her society? (*e*) Can you see any point of the author's in bringing on Viola after such an introduction as

has now been furnished? (*f*) Is there advantage of any kind in having the drunken Sir Toby (l. 112) 'hold him in delay'? (*g*) Is it wise for Olivia (l. 117) to commission her steward to dismiss, after his own pleasure, the suit of the Duke?

4 (*a*) How has Olivia (ll. 118, 119) made the Clown aware that his fooling grows stale? What is causing his decline? (*b*) Why does not the author let Viola come in? Why does he give us (ll. 126–146) Sir Toby's maudlin talk, and the Fool's weak wit, instead? (*c*) What makes Maria and Sir Toby both sure that the man at the gate is not a servant but a gentleman? (*d*) What is the effect, on us, of hearing Malvolio (ll. 147–171) discourse solemnly and stiffly about Viola and her insistence? (*e*) Why does not Viola at once announce herself as the messenger of the Duke, the ruler of the country? (*f*) Why does Olivia resolve to see the visitor?

5 (*a*) Why does Olivia (l. 172) call Maria her 'gentlewoman'? (*b*) Do you understand why Olivia should have resorted, before the Duke's messengers, to this veil? (*c*) To whom does Viola (ll. 182, 183) appeal for knowledge as to which Olivia is? (*d*) Whom does she address in (l. 186) 'Good beauties'? (*e*) Why does she not answer (l. 190) whence she comes? (*f*) Do you think she has really (l. 193) made up a speech and 'conned' it?

6 (*a*) Do you think that Viola betrays, or does not betray, in all this, her sex? (*b*) Do you think that such influences as are palpable here would be potent or not to a man like, for instance, the Duke? (*c*) Is the mollification of Maria (l. 218) by a coin a wise expedient? How would a man have managed in such an exigency? (*d*) What, besides curiosity, prompts Olivia (l. 235) to send out the attendants and Maria, and hear the visitor? (*e*) Why is she willing (ll. 252, 253) to unveil? (*f*) What makes Viola ask it?

7 (*a*) Do you think, or do you not think, that Viola finds Olivia beautiful, as beautiful as herself? What effect, upon Viola, of the seeing do you discern? (*b*) With what sincerity or with what honesty does Viola act the advocate to her master? (*c*) Why is there a change from prose to verse? (*d*) Do you think Viola (ll. 274, 275) means to exaggerate? (*e*) Why should not Olivia

be enamoured of a man (ll. 276–282) of such qualities as she enumerates? (*f*) What does Viola evidently see in this answer? How far is she impersonal (ll. 283–286) in her rejoinder?

8 (*a*) By what different course of wooing, apparently, might the Duke succeed? (*b*) What do you say (ll. 286–295) of the mode Viola proposes? Is it virile or womanish? (*c*) Is it the manner or the person that Olivia (l. 295) approves? Why does she ask the question following? (*d*) What word in l. 300 has stress? (*e*) What does (l. 302) Olivia offer? Is this what is given usually to a servant?

9 (*a*) How can Olivia, who rejects Orsino's effeminate advances, fall in love with a woman? (*b*) What makes her send Malvolio after with the ring? Will he probably execute her wish completely? (*c*) What do you say of this scene as a whole? (*d*) What has been gained by making Maria, in comparison with her mistress, so strong? (*e*) If the comedy parts in the first portion (ll. 1–176) were left out, what would be the effect upon the scene and on the piece? (*f*) What two veins of comedy are apparent in the construction of this play? (*g*) What would be the effect if either were used alone?

## ACT II

### SCENE I

1 (*a*) Why should Antonio (l. 1) wish Sebastian to stay, or to allow his company? (*b*) What is the 'malignancy' (l. 4) of Sebastian's fate, or the evidence of it? (*c*) Why apparently does Antonio ask (ll. 9, 10) the destination of his new friend's travel? (*d*) Where, after the first three words, is the stress in Sebastian's answer? (*e*) What of the consideration, the courtesy, shown (ll. 11–16) by Sebastian to the stranger? (*f*) Did Viola seem to regret, when (I. ii) first shown to us, her escape from drowning, though a woman, and conceiving her brother dead? Why should Sebastian regret rescue more?

2 (*a*) Would it seem that Viola (ll. 26, 27) resembles her brother in figure? (*b*) Would the purpose of the voyage, whatever it may have been, seem Sebastian's rather, or Viola's? Did Viola weep after the shipwreck? (*c*) How is it that after all Sebastian (ll. 43, 44) is 'bound' to Orsino's court? (*d*) Do you or do you not find it necessary to assume some motive for Sebastian's evasions, and for his unwillingness that this anxious friend should keep with him further? (*e*) What do you imagine this motive is? (*f*) What other reason (ll. 40–43) than grief brings Sebastian near to tears? (*g*) What is the purpose of this scene?

### SCENE II

1 (*a*) Do you think Malvolio has 'run' after Viola, as bidden by his mistress? (*b*) Do you find Viola (ll. 3, 4) insolent to Olivia's servant? (*c*) What do you say (ll. 5–7) of Malvolio's scolding? What tone do you catch in it? (*d*) Why does not Malvolio speak (l. 11) of Viola's returning to-morrow, as Olivia bade? (*e*) Why does not Viola at once (l. 13) deny that she left a ring with Olivia? (*f*) Whose ring does Mal-

volio think he is throwing on the ground? What do you say of his excuse for doing this? Does he believe that Viola threw it to his mistress?

2 (*a*) Why is not Viola (l. 19) well satisfied and gleeful that her rival is falling in love with her? (*b*) What does this signify concerning the character of the present heroine? (*c*) Do you think it too much that Shakespeare makes her pity Olivia? (*d*) Why does she now regret (ll. 28, 29) the disguise she wears? (*e*) What do you say too (ll. 30–33) of her insight and her philosophising?

3 (*a*) Why is not Viola worried about the outcome of her affection for the Duke? (*b*) Why is she not confident? (*c*) If Olivia could be made to conceive a proper and sufficient fondness for the Duke, what would be Viola's attitude and feeling? (*d*) What plans, now that there can be no affection between the Duke and her rival, does she begin to frame for her own profit? (*e*) Is this scene tragical or comedial? (*f*) What purpose or purposes does it serve?

### SCENE III

1 (*a*) Why does the author take the trouble to bring out (ll. 1–5) that Sir Toby has had some schooling, but Sir Andrew, not? (*b*) Where have these roysterers been keeping late hours together hitherto? (*c*) How is it that they are carousing to-night in Olivia's house, and with Olivia's wine? (*d*) Does it appear that the Clown has been trying (ll. 22–25) to improve the quality of his work? (*e*) What do you say of the stanzas (ll. 40–45 and 48–53) sung by the Clown? Are they more coarse or less coarse than would seem fitting to the scene?

2 (*a*) Why does Maria (l. 76) appear? (*b*) Why does she stay? (*c*) In whose name does Malvolio (ll. 93–99) administer his rebuke? (*d*) What do you say of a lady that (ll. 102–108) sends a servant to give her uncle notice? (*e*) Do you think (ll. 128–129) that Malvolio neglects his badge of office? (*f*) Why is Maria not concerned (ll. 132, 135) at Malvolio's threat?

3 (*a*) Do you think that Olivia (ll. 143, 144) is more exacting, or less, than hitherto? (*b*) What does Maria mean (ll. 151,

152) in saying that Malvolio is *sometimes* a *kind of* Puritan? Have you seen any signs of pietism in his talk or actions? Does Maria (ll. 159, 160) give final testimony of a convincing sort? (*c*) Why has the author been at such pains to establish motives for the trick to be played upon Malvolio? (*d*) Has Maria brought the fresh liquor lately called for? (*e*) What is the ground of her confidence that (ll. 190, 191) there shall be no more disturbance to-night?

4 (*a*) Why does the author make Sir Andrew (l. 197) boast of his past? (*b*) Why should so much amorous endeavour, in Maria's wooing of Sir Toby and Sir Andrew's hopeless tarrying for Olivia, accompany the main course of the plot? (*c*) What becomes (l. 199) of Sir Andrew's money? (*d*) Why did Sir Toby propose (l. 198) to give up for the night? (*e*) Why does he resolve differently (l. 207) at last? (*f*) Where do the knights go to burn (l. 206) the sack? (*g*) Why is not the Clown, after Malvolio's exit, heard from?

### SCENE IV

1 (*a*) At what time of the day does this scene open? (*b*) Where is the Duke entering from? (*c*) Why should he preface (ll. 1, 2) his greeting and his request by 'now'? And is there anything to be remarked about the Duke's calling for music at such an hour? (*d*) Why is it Curio (l. 8), and not Cæsario, who answers? (*e*) How does the Clown chance to be on hand at this time? Has he passed the night in the Duke's palace?

2 (*a*) Is it or is it not significant that the Duke should wish (ll. 15–20) to talk to Viola as a companion, not a servant, while the Clown is sought? (*b*) Why does the Duke, or Shakespeare rather, have music play during these moments? (*c*) Do the feminine influences of Viola seem or not seem to have touched the Duke more nearly than when we last saw them together? (*d*) How far does the situation, or the Duke's talk, appear to arouse Viola to demonstrativeness? What in her speaking seems to impress the Duke (l. 23) as 'masterly'? (*e*) Why does she indulge herself (ll. 25, 29) in equivocal answers? Is it for cunning, or the comfort of veiled confession?

3 (*a*) Does the Duke (l. 28) appear to recognise that Viola is devoid of rank? How far is the utterance mere compliment? (*b*) How much older is the Duke, seemingly, than Viola? (*c*) Why should he speak (l. 30) with such emphasis at the notion of a mere page enamoured of a woman of greater years? And what do you say (ll. 31–36) of the after observations? What do they argue about the man? (*d*) Why should the Duke (l. 44) prefer the Clown's singing to Viola's? (*e*) Is it clear that Viola has presented herself as (I. ii. 56) a eunuch, according to her plan?

4 (*a*) In how far does the Clown's song here resemble the one rendered in the last scene? (*b*) What influence, with reference to the rather tender sentiments of the present situation, has the last scene exerted upon us? (*c*) Why has the author been at such pains to bring in this singing from Olivia's jester? (*d*) Why does the Duke wish (l. 82) Curio and the attendants to withdraw, while he commissions Viola, whereas (I. iv) these were all present before? (*e*) Why should the Duke be more ready to send to Olivia now than before the talk to Viola and the singing? Why does he refer (ll. 86, 87) to Olivia's wealth, since it is inferior to his own?

5 (*a*) What feelings seem (ll. 91–95) to be uppermost in Viola's mind? How far is self-interest, how far is motherly consideration, the controlling motive? (*b*) What do you say (ll. 96–106) of Orsino's next deliverance, as in comparison with preceding ones? (*c*) Does the Duke (l. 106) interrupt Viola? (*d*) Is her meaning when finished what she began to say? Has anything like this happened in her speech before? (*e*) Do you think she has any expectation that her meaning (ll. 110–118) may in some way be divined? (*f*) Does what she here says seem consistent with the view that Orsino was a stranger when her service to him began? (*g*) Why does not Shakespeare make the antecedent circumstances, as in the play of *Gl' Ingannati*, clearer?

6 (*a*) Do you think Viola expects, or not, such a question (l. 122) as now follows? (*b*) Do you think that she has spoken to any one here (l. 124) about Sebastian? (*c*) Why does she (l. 125) change the subject, which she has herself introduced, so

abruptly? (*d*) What of comedy do you find in this scene, and of what sort? (*e*) Do you find other than comedial elements here? (*f*) What new impressions have you of Viola? (*g*) What seems to have been the purpose of this scene?

SCENE V

1 (*a*) Has Fabian been presented to us before? (*b*) Why does Sir Toby (l. 6) think Malvolio niggardly? (*c*) For whose entertainment is Maria managing her trick, and with what motive? (*d*) What does she mean (ll. 20, 21) that Malvolio has been doing? (*e*) Why, apparently, does the author make Malvolio (ll. 27–33) soliloquise about his 'fortune,' in advance?

2 (*a*) How far does it seem necessary to have Malvolio arouse the wrath of Sir Toby and Sir Andrew? (*b*) Why is Fabian so anxious lest they be overheard? Why is Maria made to withdraw? (*c*) How has Olivia seemed to her steward, that he can suppose the communication hers? (*d*) Is it or is it not remarkable that Maria has devised and executed so good a counterfeit? How has she gained her accomplishments? (*e*) What prospects or possibilities has, seemingly, Sir Toby, in the author's thought, to engage her machinations? (*f*) How much younger than Sir Toby is, apparently, his niece?

3 (*a*) Why do not Maria and the knights realise the risk of counterfeiting a 'declaration' from the mistress of the establishment? (*b*) How can the author avert the consequences of it from these persons? (*c*) Do you consider Sir Toby's enthusiasm (l. 206) genuine? (*d*) What of the resources of imagination (ll. 207, 210) shown by Sir Andrew in his excited state of mind? (*e*) How should the author think it necessary to make us know, by Maria, beforehand, how Malvolio will behave? (*f*) Why should such a scene as this be put after such a scene as the preceding?

4 (*a*) How does Maria, in her pursuit of Sir Toby, help Viola with us in her hopes and purpose? (*b*) What difference would it make, in our feelings toward Viola, if the Duke were wooing Olivia, in presence, after a virile fashion? (*c*) How far would Olivia be capable, under the most favorable circumstances, of

appreciating the Duke's intelligence and worth? (*d*) How much harm does Olivia's rejection do the Duke with us? (*e*) If Malvolio's ineffectual presumption were removed from the play, what character, besides Olivia, would suffer? (*f*) For the sake of which character was the play composed?

## ACT III

### SCENE I

1 (*a*) Does it seem that Viola recognises this Feste, her late rival in singing before the Duke? (*b*) Is it the habit of this Fool (ll. 6, 7) to explain in detail his jokes? (*c*) Comparing his utterances here with what he (I. v.) has been saying to his mistress, do you find him inclined, or not inclined, to spare the Duke's messenger? (*d*) Do you find any suggestion (ll 44–46) of a motive? (*e*) What is the Clown's temper and meaning (ll. 63–65) in his last words?

2 (*a*) How far is Viola's mind preoccupied (ll. 67–75) with her personal troubles? (*b*) Can you see any reason why she is made to pronounce this soliloquy here? (*c*) Where do Sir Toby and Sir Andrew come from? Do they or do they not still show effects of burning sack? (*d*) What do you say of Viola's success in playing a man's part in their presence? Does she seem or not seem to improve in her assumed rôle?

3 (*a*) Do you think that Viola is trying (ll. 95, 96) to captivate Olivia yet more? (*b*) What do you say (ll. 103, 104: 'leave me to my hearing') of the impression Olivia must be making upon her people? Has she put on her veil? (*c*) Why does Olivia ask (l. 107) Viola's name? (*d*) Why does Viola affect humility? How would her woman's feeling naturally prompt her to behave? (*e*) Why does Viola betray (l. 121) so quickly that she comprehends? What probably would a man have done? (*f*) What do you say (ll. 122–133) of Olivia's more explicit declaration? Is it unseemly? Does it seem like Olivia? (*g*) How far was it once considered permissible for a lady like Olivia to make advances to one beneath her rank?

4 (*a*) What do you say (l. 134) of Viola's scrupulous truthfulness to her rival? (*b*) What does Olivia (l. 138) apparently think is the reason for the unresponsiveness of this page? (*c*) What is the dramatic use (l. 140) of the striking of the

clock? (*d*) What is Olivia's point in preferring the lion to the wolf? (*e*) Why does Olivia (l. 142) so foolishly attempt to unsay herself? (*f*) What is the effect of the utterance, as a whole, upon Viola? (*g*) Does it seem (l. 148) that Viola has given Olivia the jewel (II. iv. 126) sent by the Duke?

5 (*a*) What prompts (l. 150) Olivia's question? What does she hope to elicit? (*b*) What do you say of Viola's answer? Why is she not more pointed? (*c*) What does Olivia mean in her reply? (*d*) In what sense does Viola (l. 156) use 'fool'? (*e*) How far do you think Viola feels (ll. 157, 158) the emotions that Olivia thinks she reads?

6 (*a*) Can you account for the outbreak that follows? (*b*) What is your feeling toward Olivia here? (*c*) What do you think was the look, the manner of Viola, as (ll. 169–174) she replies, judging from the effect upon Olivia? (*d*) Why does not Olivia attempt to detain her, or to continue the conversation? (*e*) Are we to judge anything, from Olivia's admission in the last line of the scene, as to what she thinks now of the messenger? (*f*) Has or has not Viola done her duty in trying to speed her master's suit?

SCENE II

1 (*a*) What is the time of this scene with reference to the last one? (*b*) Of what use here (ll. 4, 5) is Fabian? (*c*) What 'favours' has Olivia bestowed upon Sir Andrew? (*d*) Do you think Olivia did (l. 11) see Sir Andrew? (*e*) What has Olivia done to Viola that Sir Andrew considers favours?

2 (*a*) Why is Fabian shown (ll. 19–31) talking thus against his mistress? (*b*) What do you say of the evolving of the challenge? (*c*) Why does Fabian expect that (l. 61) the letter will not reach Viola? (*d*) Why does the author make Maria tell in details how Malvolio looks? (*e*) Do you think that Olivia (l. 88), were it not for her troubles, would strike him? (*f*) What is the purpose of this scene?

SCENE III

1 (*a*) Has Antonio been complying (l. 4) with Sebastian's wish? Why? (*b*) Where are these men now, and how long is

it since we last saw them? (*c*) Has Sebastian apparently yet visited Orsino's court? (*d*) Does he or does he not seem minded to take Antonio with him thither? (*e*) Why is Sebastian so evasive about his place of lodging?

2 (*a*) Is Antonio (ll. 26, 27) a citizen of Illyria? (*b*) What (l. 35) is Antonio's offence? (*c*) Why does he insist (l. 38) on leaving with Sebastian his purse? (*d*) Why does he propose the place of lodging? (*e*) Is this attachment of Antonio for Sebastian, being thoroughly un-Saxon, reasonable and credible here?

SCENE IV

1 (*a*) Why did not Olivia detain Viola, when she was with her, rather than try to induce her to return? (*b*) How does Olivia (ll. 5–7) think to use Malvolio? (*c*) How is it that Olivia is more tolerant of Malvolio than of the Duke? (*d*) What does *ho, ho* (l. 18) indicate? (*e*) What words in (ll. 26, 27) Olivia's second reply? (*f*) What is evidently (l. 32) her notion as to the cause of this strange behaviour?

2 (*a*) Why does Maria (ll. 37, 40) work herself into the situation? Why is her mistress silent? (*b*) How must Malvolio have accounted for his mistress's surprise? (*c*) How do you like Olivia in this dialogue? Is the sum of your impressions of her altered? (*d*) Do you think the author is preparing, by what he gives us here, to bring Viola and Olivia together again, or is it for some other comedial action? (*e*) What would Olivia have done (l. 67), apparently, if she had not been called away? Why does she think of 'cousin' Toby now?

3 (*a*) What do you say (ll. 71–92) of Malvolio's soliloquy? How far are you anxious, now, as to what may happen to him? (*b*) Is Sir Toby (ll. 93–96) in earnest or pretending? (*c*) In what does the comedy of the dialogue following consist? (*d*) Who will force (ll. 148, 149) Malvolio into the dark room and bind him? (*e*) How does Fabian (l. 156) know that more fun is coming?

4 (*a*) Why has the Clown given place to Fabian in these situations? How do Fabian and Feste differ? (*b*) Why does not Sir Toby think best, after all, to give the letter to Viola?

Do you think he explains, fully, in (ll. 202–208) what he says to the others? (*c*) Does Olivia seem to have invited Viola (ll. 221–237) to stay for feasting? (*d*) What do you imagine has been the current of conversation between these before we overhear? (*e*) Why does Viola appear so changed? Will she wear (l. 228) Olivia's jewel?

5 (*a*) What do you say (ll. 240–246) of Sir Toby's challenge? Does he seem, or not seem, to have associated with people of breeding at some time hitherto? (*b*) What do you say of Viola's responding paragraphs? How far do they seem masculine, how far the utterances of a woman? (*c*) What kind of comedy have we here? (*d*) Why should Shakespeare have a knight (ll. 318–319) so imposed upon? (*e*) Do you think that Fabian tells (ll. 322–324) the truth about Viola? (*f*) Do you think the author creates the ensuing situation between Viola and Sir Andrew for the sake of the comedy we see in it, or to enable (l. 342) Antonio's interference?

6 (*a*) How are we to explain Antonio's being or coming here? (*b*) What do you say (ll. 354, 355) of Viola's request to Andrew? (*c*) What does Antonio mean in (l. 366) 'with seeking you'? (*d*) Do you regard the misunderstanding now occasioned here, between Antonio and Viola, as comedial? (*e*) Why does the author carry the matter (ll. 388–391 and 393–397) so far?

7 (*a*) What do you say of Viola's repose and self-possession here? (*b*) What is (l. 406) evidently Antonio's mood? (*c*) Why does not Viola ask, as many women would have done, and excitedly, too, about Sebastian? (*d*) Does or does not Viola show Anglo-Saxon peculiarities of mind and nature? (*e*) Which among the characters so far considered in this volume does she most resemble? (*f*) How does the author get Viola away without the necessity of speech to Sir Toby and his friends?

## ACT IV

### SCENE I

1 (*a*) How has Sir Andrew missed Viola? (*b*) How does Sebastian chance to be passing? (*c*) How is it that Olivia (l. 6) has sent after Viola again? (*d*) How does this character on the whole sustain the sacrifices that the author has been forced to make of it as a rôle? (*e*) What does the Clown suppose that the supposed Cæsario (l. 20) gives him money for? (*f*) How far does Sebastian speak and act like his sister?

2 (*a*) What does Sir Andrew (l. 27) strike Sebastian with? (*b*) With what does Sebastian (l. 30) apparently strike Sir Andrew in return? (*c*) Why has the Clown put himself on the side opposite (l. 32) to those that he has sided with hitherto? (*d*) What (l. 34) is Sir Toby doing? (*e*) What (ll. 47–49) is Sir Toby's opinion of his skill with the rapier? In what attitude does Olivia find him?

3 (*a*) What signifies Olivia's way of addressing (l. 49) her uncle? Why is it not 'cousin' Toby? (*b*) Why does Olivia (l. 51) ask if it shall be 'ever' thus? What must have been the 'fruitless pranks' (l. 59) that she speaks of? (*c*) Why cannot Sebastian imagine (l. 65) that some one else may be mad besides himself? (*d*) Is it natural that a man of Sebastian's birth and breeding should follow Olivia so passively? (*e*) What sort of comedy is this?

### SCENE II

1 (*a*) Why should Maria (ll. 1–4) wish to carry the joke further? (*b*) Where did Sir Toby go after being sent away by his niece? And why is not Sir Andrew with him? (*c*) How far is there satire in this use of the character of Sir Topas? (*d*) How should Maria be equal (l. 70) to providing a priest's gown and a false beard so readily? How must Shakespeare have conceived her? (*e*) Why has not Sir Toby found, at least since l. 31, the diversion that Maria expected? (*f*) What signs of a maudlin consciousness have we noted of late in Sir Toby?

2 (*a*) Why does Sir Toby wish (ll. 71–77) a formal report of Malvolio's condition, and one rendered to him in his chamber, from the Clown? (*b*) Why does the author permit or insure such delay in our knowing the outcome of Sebastian's being drawn by Olivia into her palace? (*c*) What tempts the Clown (ll. 102–109) to play his double part? Why does the author introduce anything so farcical? (*d*) How far do you think the Clown is influenced, in (l. 121) his promise, by what (ll. 72–74) he has heard Sir Toby say? (*e*) What are your feelings toward Malvolio now? (*f*) What purposes has this scene been made to serve?

SCENE III

1 (*a*) What words in the first line have stress? (*b*) Why did Shakespeare need somebody to stand recipient, in Viola's place, of Olivia's affection? Why does he not leave Olivia, whom he has used for plot purposes so unreverently, lorn? (*c*) What are your impressions of Sebastian, who calls Olivia's impetuous suit to him (l. 11) a 'flood of fortune,' in comparison with his sister? Does or does not the author seem to care much for this character? (*d*) Has Olivia appeared to Sebastian as more potent and effective (l. 17), in controlling her affairs and people, or less efficient and strong, than we have found her?

2 (*a*) Would our feelings, if Olivia had proposed (l. 26) the final ceremony, have been the same or not the same as now? (*b*) How far was the precontract, here proposed by Olivia, less binding? (*c*) Do you think that what Olivia does would strike an audience in Shakespeare's time differently from a modern one? (*d*) Do you think Viola could have been capable of such a course as this with the Duke? (*e*) How is it to be explained that Olivia, who would be considered more modest and retiring than Viola, has been brought into such a rôle? Is the human nature here correct?

## ACT V

### SCENE I

1 (*a*) Why does not Fabian (l. 6) wish to make Malvolio's letter, as he would have done earlier, a matter of common knowledge? (*b*) Has Viola been back at the Duke's palace since leaving here? (*c*) What has, at last, drawn out the Duke to come to Olivia's home in person? (*d*) Why does the author allow, by (ll. 9–52) the Duke's talk with the Clown, so much delay? (*e*) How is it to be explained that (l. 53) the Officers bring Antonio here?

2 (*a*) What do you say of the intellectual and executive sufficiency shown (ll. 54–62) in the Duke's paragraph to his officer? How far does the Duke seem the same as in former scenes? (*b*) How far does he appear (ll. 72–75) anxious to recognise the kindness done to his page? (*c*) Does (l. 100) the Countess hear the Duke's words about her? (*d*) What signifies Olivia's addressing her visitor (l. 104) before he has paid his respects to her? (*e*) What does she mean (l. 106) by her first words to Cæsario?

3 (*a*) Why does the author make Olivia (l. 109) uncivil to the Duke, who is also governor and master of the state? (*b*) Why does Olivia think it necessary (ll. 111–113) to be uncivil? (*c*) How has the Duke (ll. 125, 128) found out Olivia's fondness for Cæsario? Has Viola betrayed it? Has the Clown, or who? (*d*) Why does Viola (ll. 145, 146) follow the Duke so willingly? Would an Anglo-Saxon Viola have done so? (*e*) Do you think she intends to reveal her identity to the Duke? (*f*) Does the Duke (ll. 137–139) hear her confession? Why does she make it to Olivia's ears?

4 (*a*) How does Viola probably explain (l. 147) Olivia's claims? (*b*) Why is she not more aroused? (*c*) How can Olivia say (l. 153) 'as great as that thou fear'st'? (*d*) Why is not Viola (l. 173) even yet dismayed? (*e*) What is significant

in (l. 178) Sir Andrew's saying 'he' instead of giving any name? (*f*) What is the use (l. 187) of such a farcical turn just here?

5 (*a*) How does the Duke know (l. 199) that Sir Toby is a gentleman? (*b*) Does Sir Toby seem intoxicated here? (*c*) Why does he use (ll. 212–214) such plain language to his friend? (*d*) Where had the knights set upon Sebastian, and upon what occasion? (*e*) What must have been the effect (l. 223) of seeing another Viola appear? Why does not Olivia speak? How soon does anybody say anything?

6 (*a*) Where (l. 228), in Antonio's question, is the stress? (*b*) Where is it (l. 233) in Sebastian's question? (*c*) Is it the brother or the sister that seems (ll. 233–243) the more aroused? (*d*) What do you say (ll. 256–260) of Viola's withholding herself from embracing her brother? (*e*) What do you say of the diction and the repose of this paragraph?

7 (*a*) Why is not Olivia (ll. 266–270) heard from? (*b*) How far is this comedial, and according to what idea or form of comedy? (*c*) What do you say (ll. 276–279) of Viola's words to the Duke? Are they in keeping? (*d*) Would she say perhaps that her occasion (I. ii. 43) is now mellow? Does she seem to have had faith in such an issue? (*e*) Why does the author devise means (ll. 281–284) of keeping us from seeing Viola again, as at the opening, in her proper clothing?

8 (*a*) Do you think (l. 284) that Malvolio wears a sword? (*b*) Why should the course of the play be delayed over the reading of Malvolio's letter? (*c*) Why should Malvolio (l. 323) be brought in, but not Maria? (*d*) What is the author's point (ll. 324–328) in having Olivia make her offer to the Duke? (*e*) Why is the Duke (ll. 322, 335) taken into the company that shall judge Malvolio? (*f*) What do you say of the showing and the impression (ll. 338–363) that Malvolio makes?

9 (*a*) What in (l. 377) Olivia's words starts Fabian up? (*b*) Does Fabian state (ll. 366–371) the responsibility fairly to himself? (*c*) Why does Shakespeare make Maria to have achieved her ends already? (*d*) Why does the author wish Malvolio to be absent from the close? How does the Clown's quotation (ll. 378–385) insure that? (*e*) Why has the author connected

Malvolio (ll. 283, 390) with Viola's benefactor? (*f*) Why is not Antonio rewarded, to us, for his Italian devotion to Viola's brother? (*g*) Why (ll. 393, 394) are all stayed at Olivia's home? (*h*) Does there seem point in the way of closing, and in having such a clown sing such a song? (*i*) What are your impressions as to the meaning of this play?

# INDEX


*All's Well that Ends Well*, 267.
Antigonus, amusing to the half-insane Leontes, 127; refuses to obey the King, 127; bidden by the King to expose the child, 128; dreams of the Queen, 134; poetic justice of his death, 134.
*Antony and Cleopatra*, 182, 270, 315.
Apollo's oracle, appealed to, 123; findings of, 132; impugned by Leontes, 132.
Arden, Mary, 237, 238, 245, 270.
Arden, Robert, 237, 238, 240, 247.
Arviragus, an Apollo nature, 75, 77; comes nearer to his sister's sympathies, 79; sounds the harp, 81; determines obsequies, 84; resolves to share in the battle, 92; resemblance to his mother, 102.
Aston Cantlowe, 237, 240.
*Astrophel and Stella*, 271.
*As you Like It*, 256, 268, 325.

Bacon question, 281.
Banquo, as Duncan's chamberlain, 203; his defection, 205; not awaked by the castle bell, 210; his death required by the plot, 212; his enemies, 214; apparition of, raised by the Witches, 215; the apparition managed so as to ruin Macbeth, 216; his apparition again produced, 219.
Belarius, intolerant of the King's Latin tastes, 65; recognises Cloten, 80; kept from the obsequies, 84; drawn by the lads into the battle, 92; helps rescue the King, 94.
Benvolio, 151, 156, 177.
Blackfriars Theatre, 274.
Brooke, *Romeus and Juliet* of, 149.
Burbage, Richard, 250, 255, 268, 274, 276.
Camillo, kept as a witness of the King's bickering, 116; his consent to poison Polyxenes, 117; a disguised guest at the festival, 144; captivated by Perdita, 145; disloyal to Polyxenes, 147.
Capulet, 152, 156, 158, 179.
Character drawing, art of, 153.
Chettle, Henry, apology of, 253.
Chorus, in *Romeo and Juliet*, 160; in *The Winter's Tale*, 161.
Cloten, assaults Posthumus, 17; belated in dissipation, 43; calls Imogen 'sister,' 49; embittered by Imogen, 53; puts on garments of Posthumus, 71; reaches Wales, 77; slain by Guiderius, 80; left as in burial beside Imogen, 86.
*Comedy of Errors*, 260, 287.
Cordelia, 304, 305, 306, 309, 310, 311, 312.
*Coriolanus*, 182, 270, 318.
Cornelius, gives pretended drugs to Queen, 28; disarms fear of the audience, 29; brings court ladies to Wales, 96.
Coventry, 240.
Cromwell, Thomas, injunction of, 237.
Cymbeline, defies Rome, 59; has Latin tastes, 65; rescued by his sons and Posthumus, 94.
*Cymbeline*, use of the two Gentlemen in, 9; maximum consummation in, 184; obstacles in, 225; subjective climax in, 230; date of, 274; place of, 287.
*Cyrano de Bergerac*, 235.

Davenant, Sir William, 250, 259.
Donalbain, aroused by the bell, 210.
Doricles, pseudonym of Florizel, 143.
Droeshout, Martin, 279.

Droeshout painting, 279.
Duncan, a weak personage, 185; not presented as in Holinshed, 190; like Polonius, 192; fails to reward Macbeth, 199; is unsuspicious, 201; brought to Macbeth's castle, 203; of the Edward Confessor type, 222.
Dunsinane, 224.

Edward the Confessor, not an efficient ruler, 222; type of, used to assist Malcolm, 222.
Emerson, quoted from, 131.
Euriphile, not mentioned in the funeral song, 85 n.
*Evan Harrington*, 232.
*Every Man in his Humour*, 255, 264.

First Act, proper ending of, 205.
First Folio, 14, 184, 189, 227, 255, 279, 280, 285.
First Lord, serves as the reader's proxy, 123; demands the response from Delphi, 132.
First Witch, wrecks a ship, 195; as Norn of the Past, 196.
Fleance, pursued, 214.
Folios, Second, Third, and Fourth, 280.
Fourth Act, a preparing time, 223.
Free Grammar School, of Stratford, 242.

Gertrude, Hamlet's mother, redeemed by Shakespeare, 291; restored to her son, 299; prevaricates to the King in his behalf, 301; drinks to his success, 301.
Ghost of Hamlet the Elder, return of, 297; his forgiveness of Gertrude, 298.
*Globe Shakespeare*, 14 n.
Globe Theatre, 267, 275.
Goneril, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310.
Greene, Robert, responsible for the appeal to Delphi, 124; his mention of a jury not borrowed, 129; attack of, on Shakespeare, 251.
Guiderius, more active and martial of the brothers, 73; like his sister, 75; kills Cloten, 80; determines the place of burial, 84; drawn by Arviragus into the battle, 92; aids in rescue of King, 94.

Hall, Dr. John, 270, 278.
Hall, Elizabeth, 280.
Hamlet, scruples of, 290; drastic use of, for artistic ends, 294, 301; trusts again his mother, 300; his soliloquy over campaign of Fortinbras, 302; magnificent in action, 302.
*Hamlet*, 256, 269, 288, 290.
Hathaway, Anne, 246, 248, 276, 280.
Hemmings, John, 274, 276, 280.
*Henry IV, First Part of*, 263.
*Henry V*, 267, 287.
*Henry VI, Third Part of*, 252.
*Henry VIII*, 274, 275.
Hermione, called on by the King to keep his friend from going, 112; offers an excuse for her husband, 114; draws Polyxenes aside, 115; her sorrow for her husband, 121; her faith in the right, 122, 130; the womanliness of her part, 131; unaroused by the response, and the death of Mamillius, 133; swoons at her husband's confession, 133; compared with Imogen, 134; the secret of her power, 135.
Holinshed, 185, 186, 187, 190, 191, 199, 212, 213, 219, 312.

Iachimo, lies in wait for Posthumus, 22; outwits him, 27; in awe of Imogen, 34; his strategy of the trunk, 41; his fear in Imogen's chamber, 46; exasperates Posthumus, 55; drawn into the British wars, 77; conscience of, aroused, 93; confesses to Imogen, 99.
Imogen, repose of, 11; objectiveness of, 19; influence of, on Iachimo, 34; deceived by the strategy of the trunk, 41; a reader, 43; made capable of embittering Cloten, 52; lured away from court, 62; willing to go to Italy, 69; her supposed death, 81; willing to go away from the supposed grave of her husband, 88; refuses to save Lucius, 98; sorrows for her father's loss, 102; her character, 105; compared to Hermione, 134.
Incident plays, 287.
Interpretation of a play, 5.

Jonson, Ben, 255, 263, 279, 285.
Juliet, age of, 153; promises to be dutiful, 155; discerns Romeo's nature, 158; of Gothic temperament, 160; gives up her hate of the Montagues, 166; her matter-of-fact mind, 167; plans for herself and Romeo, 168; her faith, 170; forgets to arrange, with Romeo, the hour, 172; an Imogen-nature, 175; power of, over Shakespeare's audiences, 175; tries to confess to her father, 179; accepts death, in effect, for Romeo's honour, 179; does not ask for reasons, 180.
*Julius Cæsar*, 288, 312.

Kemp, William, 255, 268.
King James, 225, 254, 269.
*King John*, 260.
*King Lear*, 182, 270, 303.
Kronberg, 300.

Label, interpolated use of, 104.
Lady Capulet, 152, 153, 154, 155, 159.
Lady Macbeth wills her husband's advancement, 200; aroused by news of the King's coming, 201; prays for help against her weakness, 201; worships her husband, 202; controls her husband, 205; essays the killing, 207; her first blunder, 209; her swoon, 211; appears but once as Queen, 211; drives away her guests, 217; walks in her sleep, 224.
Lady Macduff, butchery of, 219; idealised through her son, 220.
Lear, not savage or brutish, 309.
Leontes, insults of, to King of Bohemia, 111, 112; puts on his Queen the burden of making Polyxenes stay, 112; his jealousy, 113; his irony to the Queen, 115; goes aside with Mamillius, 116; invades the Queen's apartments, 120; exasperated by her repose, 122; applies to the oracle at Delphi, 123; stands in awe of the Queen's strength, 126; forces Antigonus to expose the child, 128; summons the sessions, 129; impugns the oracle, 132; confesses his insincerity, 133; proposes daily grief, 137.
Literature, an institutional device, 7.
Literature of Shakespeare, 330, 331.
*Love's Labour's Lost*, 263.
*Love's Labour's Won*, 267.
Lucius, belittled by the author, 98 n.
*Lucrece*, 258.

Macbeth, how to make a hero of, 186; did not kill Macdonwald, 186; obliged to defeat the Danes, 191; aided by witchcraft, 191; delivers Scotland, 193; cousin of Duncan, 193; the hero of the country, 196; his loyalty to the king, 198; a free moral agent, 199; feels his first fear, 202; his first blunder, 209; subordination to Macduff, 210; appears crowned but once, 211; as the Third Murderer, 214; sleepless and crazed, 215; identifies the apparition of Banquo, 216; his accelerated decline, 218; withdraws to Dunsinane, 224.
*Macbeth*, 182; first scene in, 187; a simple play, 194; knocking on the gate in, 208; why a tragedy, 213; made perhaps on requisition of King James, 225; production of, 270; place of, in the grouping, 287.
Macdonwald, 185, 186, 191, 205.
Macduff, the strong man of the play, 209; disconcerts Macbeth, 210; characterised through his son, 220; subordinated by Malcolm, 221; his new motive for vengeance, 223.
Major obstacle in *Macbeth*, 198; resolution of, 205, 208; in *Cymbeline*, 226; in *The Winter's Tale*, 227; in *Romeo and Juliet*, 229; in *Richard Carvel*, 231; in *Quentin Durward*, 232; in *Evan Harrington*, 233; in *The Princess*, 234.
Malcolm, saved from capture, 190; made Prince of Cumberland, 199; aroused by the bell, 210; must succeed Macbeth, 220; subordinates Macduff, 221; amended martially, 223.
Mamillius, praised for his mother's sake, 111; used against Hermione, 115; prefers his mother's company to toys, 118; his penetration, 119; his ghost stories, 119; instructed by his father in his mother's shames, 126.

Man's selfishness and woman's sacrifice, 180.
Marienlist palace, 300.
Masters of the witches, 188, 191.
Maximum consummation, 184, 193, 197, 211, 212, 224, 229, 231, 233, 234, 235.
*Measure for Measure*, 270.
*Merchant of Venice*, 182, 263, 287, 288, 326.
Mercutio, nearest friend to Romeo, 156; ridicules Romeo's devotion, 163; not high-minded, 164; appropriation and merging of, in Romeo, 177.
Meres, Francis, 265, 271.
*Merry Wives of Windsor*, 249, 268.
*Midsummer Night's Dream*, 287, 321.
Minor Obstacle in *Macbeth*, 197; resolution of, 199, 205; in *Cymbeline*, 226; in *The Winter's Tale*, 228; in *Romeo and Juliet*, 229; in *Richard Carvel*, 231; in *Quentin Durward*, 232; in *Evan Harrington*, 233; in *The Princess*, 234.
*Moral Plays*, 287.
*Much Ado*, 268, 287, 320.
Mysteries, the ancient, 240.

Novel, constructed on Shakespeare's plan, 197, 230; *Richard Carvel*, 231; *Quentin Durward*, 231; *Evan Harrington*, 232; *Quo Vadis*, 235.
Nurse, Juliet's, 152, 153, 154, 160, 171, 172, 177, 179.

*Othello*, 182, 269, 289, 313.

*Palladis Tamia*, 265, 271.
Paris, 152, 155, 157.
Pauline, not found in Greene's novel, 124; the need of such a character, 124, 125; brings the babe before the king, 126; defies the king's guards, 127; pursues the king with invective, 133; relents, and begs the king's forgiveness, 134; keeps the queen in hiding, 137.
Perdita, arrayed in palace finery, 143; tested, as mistress of the festival, 144; makes her own social forms, 145; captivates Camillo, 145; keeps aloof from the finery, 146; tried by the anger of the King, 147; subordinated to her mother, 148; her precontract, 248.
*Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, 270.
Personal Plays, 287.
Pisanio, patronised by the Queen, 17; a man of years, 21; perplexed by Imogen, 66; prepares Imogen to seek her husband, 68; enters service of Cloten, 71.
Polyxenes, strange attachment of, to King of Sicily, 111; his rhetorical leave-taking, 111; piqued by his friend, 112; considers himself persuaded by Hermione to remain, 113; his inconsistency, 116; insensible to the consequences of his flight, 118; in disguise at the sheep-shearing festival, 144; used as means of turning the plot, 146.
Posthumus, relatively weak, 12; assaulted by Cloten, 18; over-reached by Iachimo, 26, 55; his unmanly vengeance, 61; his remorse, 92; strikes Imogen, 100; forgives Iachimo, 103.
Precontract of marriage, 146, 247, 248.
'Principalities,' use of, in *Macbeth*, 186.
Prolonged time, impressions of, in *Romeo and Juliet*, 170.
Puns in *Romeo and Juliet*, 168.

Queen, pretends sympathy with Imogen, 10; brings Cymbeline to interrupt the lovers, 14; receives drugs from the court physician, 28; answers Lucius, 58; twits the king of slowness, 70; death reported by Cornelius, 96.
Queen Elizabeth, 241, 260, 263, 268, 269.
*Quentin Durward*, 231.
Quiney, Thomas, 275.

Reading between the lines, 194.
Reading Shakespeare, difficulties of, 4.
Regan, 304, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310.
*Returne from Pernassus*, 269.
*Richard Carvel*, 231.
*Richard II*, 260, 262, 268.
*Richard III*, 260, 262, 287.
Richardson, John, 246.
Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle, 312.
Roman lieutenant, sets out to meet Lucius, 87.
Romeo, in love with his ideals of love, 151; falsely enamoured of Rosaline,

152; considerate of the servant, 152; discovers Juliet, 156; enters the garden of the Capulets, 163; overhears Juliet's soliloquy, 165; his romantic mind, 167; inherits Mercutio's gifts and brilliancy, 177.
*Romeo and Juliet*, purpose of street fray in, 150; deeper meaning of, 178; superior to *Cymbeline*, 181; maximum consummation in, 184; brought out at The Curtain, 261; printed, 262.
Rosaline, 152, 162, 163.
*Rosalynde*, of Thomas Lodge, 325.
Ross, 193, 198, 219, 222.
Ross and Angus, 197, 198.

Sandells, Fulk, 246.
*Scourge of Simony*, 268.
Second Witch, as Norn of the Present, 196; prophecy of, confirmed, 198.
*Sejanus*, 255.
Separation of acts of a play, 217.
Sergeant, need of, 190; time of his coming from the field, 192.
Shakespeare, Edmund, 239, 270.
Shakespeare, Gilbert, 239.
Shakespeare, Hamnet, 246, 261.
Shakespeare, Joan, 239.
Shakespeare, John, marriage of, 237; birthplace of, 238; removal of, to Stratford, 238; purchase of Henley Street house by, 239; pursued for debt, 244.
Shakespeare, Judith, 246, 275, 280.
Shakespeare, Richard, 239.
Shakespeare's company, 254.
Shakespeare's public, 2.
Shakespeare, Susanna, 245, 270, 276, 278.
Shakespeare's women, 142, 174.
Shakespeare, William, climaxes of, 84; models of, 107; as a revealer, 108; as artist, 109; of same ideals at twenty-eight as at forty-six, 175; unchanged in insight, 181; birth of, 236; first mention of, 236; mother of, 237; teachers of, 243; Latin, knowledge of, 243; marriage of, 245; Sir Thomas Lucy's persecution of, 249; removal to London, 250; attack upon, by Greene, 251; applies for coat armour, 261; buys New Place, 261; Jonson's tribute to, 265; Mere's praise of, 265; buys tithes of Stratford, 270; optimism of, 273; buys a house in Blackfriars, 274; returns to Stratford, 275; his will, 275; inscription on tomb of, 277; saneness of, 280; conviviality of, 281; originality of, 286.
Shallow, Justice, 249.
Shottery, 240.
Sidney, Sir Philip, 271, 281.
Siward, the Elder, used to amend Malcolm, 223.
*Sonnets*, Shakespeare's, 270; dark lady of, 272.
Stratford bust, 277.
Stratford upon Avon, 239.
Subjective climax, in Shakespeare's plays, 136; in *Macbeth*, 217; in *Cymbeline*, 230; in *The Winter's Tale*, 230; in *Romeo and Juliet*, 230; in *Richard Carvel*, 231; in *Quentin Durward*, 232; in *Evan Harrington*, 233; in Tennyson's *The Princess*, 234.

*Taming of the Shrew*, 283, 322.
Theatre, the, 175, 250.
*The Princess*, of Tennyson, 234.
*The Tempest*, 274, 287.
Third Act begins new action, 128, 211.
Third Murderer, 214.
Third Witch, not summoned, 189; aids Macbeth, 191; as Norn of the Future, 197.
*Timber*, Ben Jonson's, 285.
*Timon of Athens*, 270.
*Titus Andronicus*, 259, 287.
Tragedy, first condition of, 184.
*Troilus and Cressida*, 270, 289.
*Twelfth Night*, 176, 182, 248, 268, 287, 288, 323.

Ultimate purpose of novels, 233; of *Richard Carvel*, 233; of *Quentin Durward*, 233; of *Evan Harrington*, 234.
Use of the questions, 4, 330.

*Venus and Adonis*, 257.
Viola, 176, 287.

Warwick, 241.
What all men seek, 6.

What it is to be educated, 7.
What Shakespeare can supply, 7.
*Winter's Tale*, opened like *Cymbeline*, 111; subjective climax in, 230; plot of, not absurd, 140; maximum consummation in, 184; may be considered a comedy, 228; date of, 274.
Witches, use of, at once in *Macbeth* 187; their storm, 187; their coming together, 188; different in knowledge, 188; their summons, 188; return of, 195; wind up their charm, 196; produce the air-drawn dagger, 206; raise an apparition of Banquo, 215; compromise Macbeth, 216.
Wriothesley, Henry, 257, 259, 262.

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